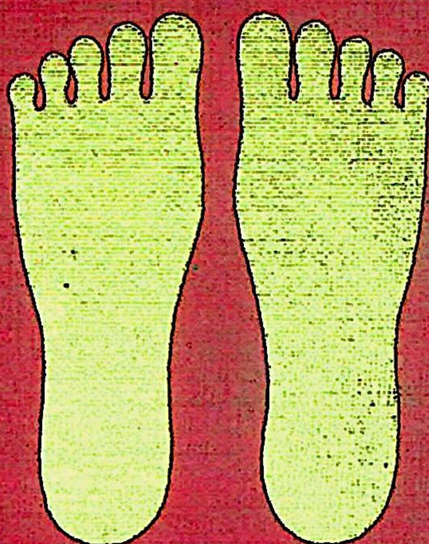
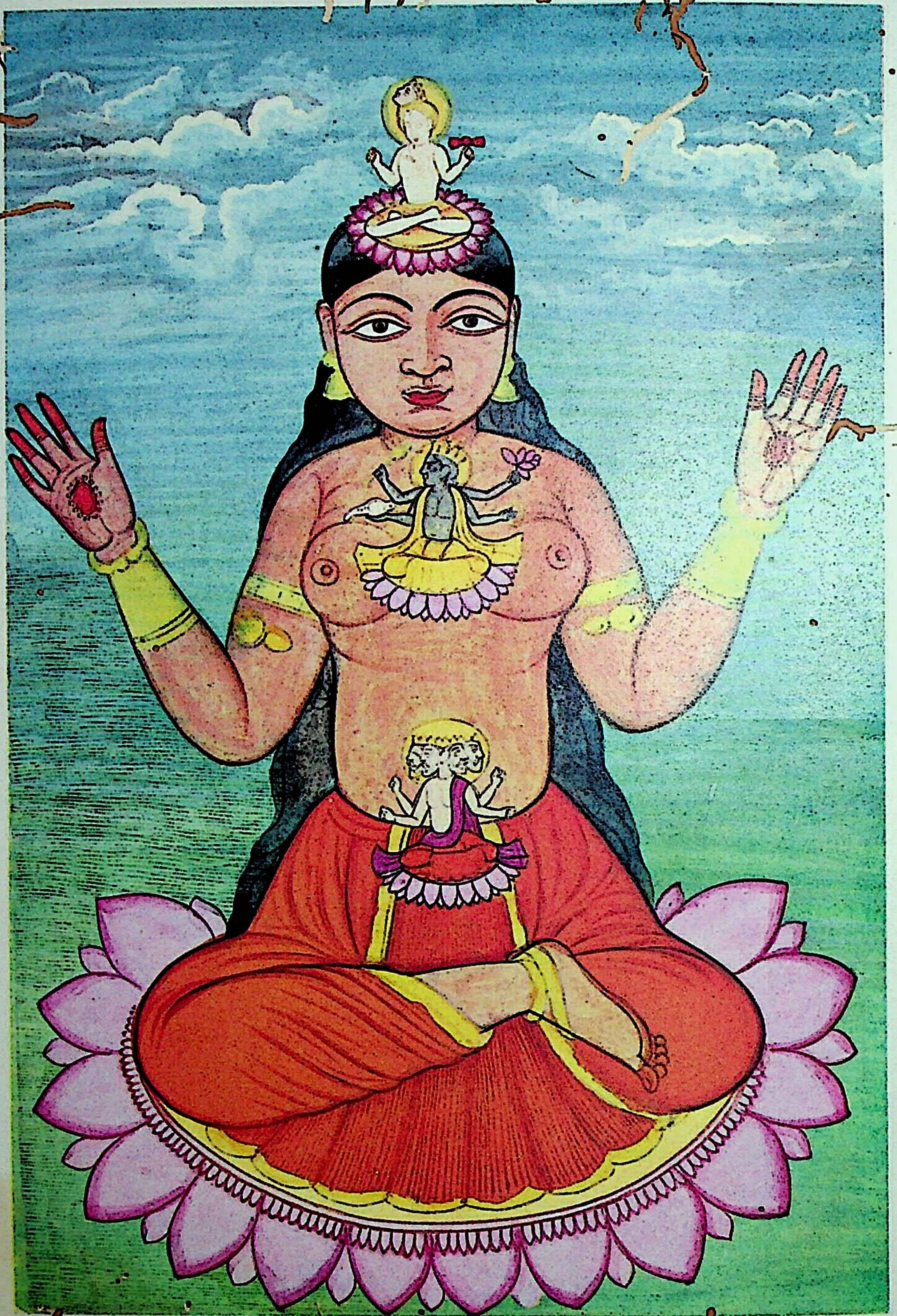


Tantra Yoga



Devi

Tantra Yoga

by

Nik Douglas

with original photographs by the author



MUNSHIRAM MANOHARLAL, NEW DELHI

MUNSHIRAM MANOHARLAL
Oriental Publishers
54 Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 55

Sales Counter 4416 Nai Sarak, Delhi 6

First Published January 1971

PRINTED IN INDIA
BY A.K. MUKERJI AT THOMSON PRESS (INDIA) LIMITED, FARIDABAD, HARYANA, AND PUBLISHED BY DEVENDRA JAIN FOR MUNSHIRAM MANOHARLAL, NEW DELHI

Dedicated to all who will tread the path of Tantra Yoga.

Contents

"Men worship with devotion, Him who dwells in the region of Light, which needs no Light, and which is beyond the Lights of Sun, Moon and Fire."

Anandalahari



It is what is
Gorakhsa Samhita

Shiva Bhairav, as the *Bindu*, Rhanipur Jharial Yogini Pitth.

"The Tantras represent a philosophy comprehensive enough to embrace the whole of knowledge, a system of meditation which will produce the power of concentrating the mind upon anything whatsoever, and an art of living which will enable one to utilize each activity of Body, Speech and Mind, as an aid to the path of Liberation."

Gampopa

"I call to mind the Mother of the whole Universe, who has created this world, both real and unreal and who, by Her power with its substance, protects it, and having destroyed it, She then plays."

Devibhagavata



Yoni of initiation
(Wood)
South India : Contemporary.

CHAPTER I

Origins and Development

The word "Tantra" implies a process of weaving and expansion. The inner and outer worlds, microcosm and macrocosm, are like the two sides of a fabric. This fabric, composed of all the elements and energies of the Universe, may be consciously "woven" by the practice of Tantra Yoga. Tantra is continuity. Yoga means union. The joining in union of inner and outer, brought about through Tantric practice, is the goal of all mystico-magical systems both in the East and in the West.

Reality is but a flow of ever-changing forces. Elements, energies, phenomena, events and actions interact continually. By means of conscious efforts in accordance with the innate principles of universal harmony, it is possible to create new conditions on the surface of reality. This is the message of Tantra. The "Tantric" teachings are the accounts of direct Yoga experiences ... accounts of cosmic unions. Such experiences reveal great knowledge and wisdom.

The origins of Tantra are rather obscure. It appears that magical practices influenced all the earliest civilisations. On the Indian subcontinent religio-magical practices, rather similar to those throughout the ancient world, had developed since the very earliest times. Though no overall system is apparent, it is clear that those "systems" or "rituals" which produced a desired result did so because of common natural principles. All the earliest religio-magical practices are of an Animist nature . . . the "worship" of natural energies, the elements, astronomical bodies, ancestors or spirits, mountains, rivers, trees, stones, great rocks, animals and birds, accompanied by Shamanistic-type rituals centered around individuals who possessed, or appeared to possess, various "magical" powers. These individuals later became popular as Gods, Goddesses, Magicians or "High Priests", and in time their

achievements and their practical techniques became a part of mythology.

"There is no question that the techniques of Yoga are far advanced beyond the crude techniques of Shamanism. While Shamanistic practices illuminate the basic physiological changes induced in the body, we must turn to Yoga to understand the mental dynamics of autonomy."

Andrija Puharich

The rather obscure origins clear somewhat during the early Indus valley periods (circa 3500 B.C.) where at Harappa and Mohenjodaro the excavations have revealed images seated in traditional Yoga postures, and exhibiting the signs of a well developed Yoga philosophy. Other finds from the same region indicate that the worship of the Male Principle (the *Linga* : Phallus) and the Female Principle (the *Yoni* : Vulva), were at the basis of a philosophical foundation of systematized Yoga. This became more apparent with the development of the *Shaivite* and *Shakta* cults.

Shiva, Lord of the Yogis, lived in the Himalaya mountains in ancient times. A master-Shaman, and Supreme Ascetic, he impressed his fellow Dravidians with the greatness of his Yogic powers. He was one of the great *Siddhas,* along with Tirumular, Bogar, Agastyar, Gautama Buddha, Mahavira, Patanjali, Gorakhnath, Matsyendranath, Asanga, Nagarjuna, Tilopa, Naropa, Padmasambhava, Saraha, Gampopa, Milarepa, and many others. A *Siddha* is one who has attained very great occult powers (*Siddhi*) through practices which we may now recognise as Tantric.

That Shiva left a great impression on the minds of both his disciples and his opponents is evident from the many stories of his exploits, and in the later appearance of the Shiva cults. The worship of the Linga was associated with the worship of Shiva, but the worship of the Mother Goddess (symbolised by the Yoni) remained in its primitive form and was not developed into the Shakta cult until after the Aryan invasions.

When the Aryans arrived in India they brought with them their own beliefs and practices. Originating from North-west Europe, they had naturally assimilated much of the magical practices of the Hittites, Egyptians, Babylonians, Scythians and Zoroastrians as well as the

more primitive (yet essentially Tantric) Animist rites of the early Mediterranean periods. Religious observances were very complex, and magic highly developed. As the Aryans mixed and intermarried with the dark skinned (Dravidian) Indians, so also the beliefs and practices became mixed, and *Hinduism* was the result. There was no such thing as Hinduism before the Aryans arrived in India.

The whole continent underwent a great change, both of the communities having to compromise in the formation of religious and social structures. Shiva, though not an Aryan hero, came to be accepted in the "Hindu" pantheon, and was subsequently lauded in the Upanishads. That he was non-Vedic in origin is clear from the Mahabharata and later Pauranic stories of the sacrifice (Vedic) made by Prajapati father of Sati, one of the "wives" or "shaktis" of Shiva, and the non-invitation of Shiva himself (despite his fame) on account of his Dravidian practices. In this story Sati goes to the sacrifice, dies or is killed, Shiva arrives in a fit of rage and sorrow and, after "tainting" the sacrifice, picks up her body on his back. Carrying her body he walks the heavens, so disturbing the Gods. Finally Vishnu, riding the Garuda-bird, cuts her body to pieces with his discus. The story then explains how the pieces of her body fall to the ground in places which later become the "seats" of the Tantric Centres.

The term Tantra implies system. No form of magical practice should be termed Tantric if it is not systematic. The Aryans brought many practices of a Tantric nature with them, and these were incorporated in their religious practices both before and after their invasions of India. Practices such as *Mantrayana*, the repetition of sound vibrations in definite sequence, and the ordered blending of elements, are similar to the ritual Yoga techniques of the Siddhas, and with the Tantric Philosophy.

The Tantric teachings were always closely guarded secrets given from Master to disciple only when the time of preparation had been completed. The teachings, mostly in oral tradition, consist of Yogic instructions for the inner purification and transformation of the body and spirit of the practicer. They always stress the need for the person to be able to contain the high condition of Being. A mature philosophy is a fundamental prior to Tantric initiation . . .

"The person who wants to practice the way of Tantric instruction should first be

endowed with detachment and renunciation, which is the common basis for all ways of practice in Buddha-law."

Dalai Lama

Tantric instruction generally includes the sciences of Alchemy, Medicine, Astronomy and Astrology (not separated), Chemistry, Meditation, Visualisation, Astral Projection and other more advanced practices. The Yogis of the East are undoubtedly able to acquire "magical" powers through the method of Tantric techniques. Tradition tells us that Gautama Buddha, like other great Siddhas, taught the Tantras as methods by which his more advanced followers could realise the fantastic potential within the human being. He is credited with the magical powers (Siddhis) described in the Tantric texts, and he instructed his closest followers in the ancient Yoga methods so that they could more easily understand his philosophy, more effectively teach his doctrine of universal brotherhood, and more quickly realise Buddhahood. He maintained that bad *Karma* (the result of action) is the cause of all miseries, that Karma is the creation of delusion, and that delusion is the result of an undisciplined mind. He realised that the only way to correct this condition is to discipline the mind, overcome the obscuring factors of ignorance, and so to remake (transmute) the actual Being.

"All beings are Buddhas, but this is obscured by accidental defilement. When this is removed, they are Buddhas at once, of this there is no doubt."

Hevajra tantra

It is difficult to assertain exactly when the first Tantras were put into a written form from the oral tradition, though research in the future, together with the discovery and decipherment of lost and misplaced manuscripts, will undoubtedly shed more light on this question. Tantra owes to Buddhism the first recorded outlines of the ancient Tantric methods.

Most of the written Tantras had their meaning well disguised by means of a language of symbols and similes. This language is termed *Sandhyabhasa*, meaning "twilight language". The indescribable states which are experienced by the Yogis were written and painted in this allegorical way both in order to preserve the teachings in such a manner that only the initiated would be able to understand the real meaning,

and in order to facilitate, by the use of symbols, the process of learning. Around about the third or fourth centuries A.D. these Tantras were written down from the oral tradition. Though Patanjali had written his Yoga Sutras before that time, and Charak and Sushrut had written their treatises on medicine, these do not really mark the beginnings of the written Tantric foundation as the philosophical basis, so recognisable in all Tantric works, had not yet been developed.

The first written Tantras were of Buddhist origin, coming from the *Vajrayana* schools of Mahayana ("Greater Way") doctrine. These written Tantras described practices which made use of sound formulae *(Mantra)*, diagrams *(Yantra)*, magic circles *(Chakra* & *Mandala)*, visualisations of elements and elementals, forms of Gods and Goddesses representing the manifestations of energies of natural principles, ritual postures *(Asanas)*, gestures *(Mudras)* used as aids to meditative concentration, and many other processes of *Sadhana* (Worship). All Tantras include some or all of these aids as well as social and scientific data. Among the first written Tantras are : ***the Prajnaparamita, the Gûhyasamaja, the Manjusrimulakalpa*** and ***the Hevajratantra.***

The early Tantric writings refer to four "holy places" or "holy centres" as being the original "seats" of Tantra. These were referred to as Pitths. The later medieval Tantras refer to many more than these four traditional homes of Tantra, and associate the eight, eighteen, forty-two, fifty, fifty-one, sixty-four or one hundred and eight named placed with the Mahabharata story of the dismemberment of the body of Sati, wife of Shiva . . . the pieces of her body (presently reckoned to be 51 in number according to orthodox Hindu tradition) being enshrined where they fell, becoming places of pilgrimage and "seats" of Tantra. That the large number of places mentioned in the later Puraṇas and medieval Tantras are different from the original four great Pitths mentioned in such ancient and authoritative works as the ***Sadhanamala*** and the ***Hevajratantra,*** is without doubt. The many later-named holy "pitths" are in fact clearly found to be but one of the following in every instance :

(i) Mountains, hills, clefs, stones or pools having external appearances resembling the male or female organs of generation . . . the Linga & Yoni . . . and so thought of as being places of "residence" of the Shiva or Shakti/Shakta forces. These places were venerated in ancient

times and came to be called Pitths as that Tantric tradition became known. Also venerated were places where meteorites fell, or were found.

(ii) Places where great sages or Yogis attained spiritual insight and where disciples could become initiated. Often such places would be remote cremation-grounds which would then become places of pilgrimage once associated with the idea of the Pitths.

(iii) Natural occurrences such as great Pipal trees, Bodhi or Margosa groves and the like. These were worshipped in ancient Dravidian times and later became known as "abodes of Shakti".

(iv) Sites of temples, actual temples, shrines or stupas housing the relics or ashes of great Gurus. These came to be called Pitths after the Shiva/Sati story of the enshrined relics. It is interesting that after Gautama Buddha was cremated, his remains too were distributed throughout the East and housed in Stupas.

The early tradition of the four Pitths does not in fact refer to the whole of India, but only to a relatively small area in the Eastern quarter of India ... to the Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa states.

The *Sadhanamala* names the four traditional Pitths as :

(i) Uddiyana .... Odiyana.
(ii) Kamakhya .... Kamrup.
(iii) Sirihatta .... Sylhet.
(iv) Purnagiri .... Purnasaila.

Other Tantras differ slightly with the names, though it is remarkable how close they remain considering the age of this esoteric tradition.

Traditionally the foremost of the four great Pitths has always been Uddiyana. Though often identified with *Udyana* in what is now the Swat state of West Pakistan, the author, among others, has come to the conclusion that *Orissa* state, in Eastern India, is the more likely location. Following leads given by *Dr. Benoytosh Bhattacharya,* the author travelled in search of furthur evidence, and now tends to locate this Pitth at Udayagiri (the tri-hills of Udayagiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitagiri) in Orissa, from where archaeological evidence of very early Tantric activity has recently come to light. Orissa used to be known as the Kingdom of *Odra,* and, in consideration of a wealth of evidence,

it would appear that *Uddiyana, Odra, Udayagiri* and *Orissa* are one and the same. *Indrabhuti,* King of Orissa (himself a great Tantric) had an adopted son called *Padmasambhava.* It was this same Padmasambhava who introduced Tantric Buddhism to Tibet, defeated the Shaman-Bons at magic (incorporating their invoked energies into the Buddhist system) and founded the "Red-Hat" *Nyingmapa* order of Lamas. This was in the eighth century. Iconographical comparisons between images from Orissa and Tibet show similarities of style and esoteric content so identical that only evidence of early Tantric activities among the monasteries of Swat, can open this to furthur interpretation. In Orissa, there is so much evidence of Tantrism, from the earliest times, that there can be no doubt that the original Pitth of Uddiyana can definitely be located there.

The author was fortunate enough to be able to visit, and study, both of the "64-Yogini" Pitths in Orissa (at least one of which has been in existence since the time of Padmasambhava), and it is clear that such specialised centres can only point to an ancient tradition of Tantric development. These "energy-circles" ... circular flying-saucer-like structures ... open to the sky, and astronomically located, contain the most exquisite "passengers". Each dancing Yogini, either peaceful or wrathful, perhaps with the head of a bull or lion, dancing upon full lotuses or the crouched figure of a man, exhibiting various exact gestures and expressions, represents certain natural energies "tamed" by the Siddha Matsyendra Nath. These energies circle around the Immovable Shiva (In fully Tantric aspect), and we find them represented as Yoginis (in the early Tantras such as the *Hevajra)* and *Dakkinis* ... goddesses adorned with the symbolic ornaments of human bone ... in the Tibetan tradition. The Siddha *Matsyendranath* expounded and developed the *Sahaja* Tantrism (The doctrine of Bliss), and he is identified in Tibet as Luipa (one of the "traditional" 84 *Mahasiddhas).* Regarding the other three Pitths there is less difficulty locating the area today. Kamakhya pitth is well known to be situated in the ancient Kingdom of Kamrup, which is definitely in the Assam state. The pitth there is still intact, and traditionally represents the Yoni of Sati. Recent reports indicate that the *Hevajratantra* is still practiced there, and that Assam is one of the few remaining areas where the Yogini-Chakra (*Kaula* mystic circle) is still made. The

Sirihatta pitth is also located in Assam, in the area now known as Sylhet. The location of the fourth pitth . . . Purnagir, Paurnagiri or Purnasaila . . . is still unsettled, though it has been suggested that the village of Vajrayogini in the Vikrampur area of East Bengal, from which a great number of early Tantric images have been discovered, is the most likely location. Other authorities have also considered Assam and Bihar as being the more likely.

From the time of Gautama Buddha the Tantric teachings were systematically expounded, and they became known to more than just a handful of close initiates. These teachings were spread from the four great centres *(Pitths)* and other centres came to be developed. With the increase of knowledge, the philosophical questions underlying reality were put to test and different intellects grasping different parts of the whole produced the different branches of Tantrism with the different techniques of Yoga.

Buddhist thought was already divided into the two paths of understanding . . . the *Mahayana* and the *Hinayana* . . . and these further divided as *Tantrism* became more widespread. The *Hinayana* school of thought, exoteric in nature, sought to attain *Nirvana* (Enlightenment) for the sake of the individual, whereas the *Mahayana* school of thought, esoteric in nature, sought to attain Nirvana not only for the sake of the individual, but also for all beings (the concept of Bodhisattvahood) . . . and made use of the Tantric techniques of Yoga as aids to this end. The concept of Brotherhood became very popular, and, with this foundation, many philosophical schools of thought were developed.

The Siddha *Nagarjuna* expounded the *Madhyamaka* system concerning the nature of Nirvana . . . a question upon which Gautama Buddha refused to comment openly . . . and speculated that Nirvana is a condition of absolute Voidness, where neither existence nor non-existence, nor a combination of the two nor a negation of the two, can be found. This philosophical formulation did not satisfy many of those who could not really comprehend the question . . . the very reason why Buddha refused to answer it . . . and so the *Yogacara* school was developed. This expounded that Nirvana is not Void (*Sunyata*), but *positive*, and filled with consciousness. In later times, with penetration and insight, the *Mahasukhavada* philosophy was realised and this

maintained that Nirvana is composed of three parts :

(i) *Sunyata*	:	Voidness
(ii) *Vijnana*	:	Consciousness
(iii) *Mahasukha*	:	Blissfulness ("Great Happiness")

This philosophical concept came to be known as the *Vajrayana,* and it was upon this basis that all the truly Tantric practices were formulated. The great authority Dr. B. Bhattacharya writes :

> "It is abundantly clear that Vajrayana was a direct development of the Yogacara school of Mahayana Buddhism, which was started by Maitreya Natha in the third century A.D."

Vajrayana is, by definition, the Way of Firmness. The great truths, as realised by the Rishis and Siddhas, were taught by them, and gradually more and more people came to know of the Tantras. Gradually Hindus, Buddhists and Jains were advocating Tantric practices, which were modified according to the different religious requirements. Even Muslim forms of Tantra came into being through the Sufi brotherhoods, which even now make use of similar techniques for the inner Realisation.

Many of the greatest Tantric teachings have never been written down, much has been greatly misinterpreted, and a very large portion still remains to be deciphered from original manuscripts. After the journey of the Siddha Padmasambhava to Tibet in the eighth century there was a period covering more than five centuries when Sanskrit, Bengali, Oriya and Assamese manuscripts were collected by the ardent Tibetans, to be translated into their own language. The Tibetans faithfully translated and incorporated the volumes of Tantras, and their commentaries, into the Tibetan canon . . . of which about one third are either Tantras or commentaries.

The Vajrayana practitioners, called *Vajracharyas,* believe that all beings have Buddha-nature, but that this is obscured due to the prevailing conditioning of being born and dying. The aim of the Tantric is to remove the obscuring factors, and so attain perfect Realisation. It is believed that this is possible within the period of a lifetime, and that it is the first responsibility of man to become conscious and so be able to exist according to inherent harmonious nature of the cosmos.

Man is a cosmic being. The highest truth (cosmic consciousness) is realised by the correct mingling of *wisdom* and *means*, these two being inseparable in the process of inner "unfoldment". The translator of the *Hevajra tantra* points out :

"It is the dominating notion of two-in-one upon which the whole complicated structure of the Tantras is reared, and this applies to its philosophy, its theology and its practice of Yoga."

D. Snellgrove

According to the "Hindu" tradition :

"He, by the power of Yoga, became in the act of creation, two-fold; the right half was Male (Purusha) and the left half was Female (Prakriti)."

Brahmavaivartta Purana

The Cosmic Union of the opposites, macrocosmically and also microcosmically, is the activity of the Tantric. Many are the complementary pairs which are blended together in the process of Union (*Yoga*) . . .

Subject (*Aham*)	&	Object (*Idam*)
Voidness (*Sunyata*)	&	Compassion (*Karuna*)
Wisdom (*Prajna*)	&	Means (*Upaya*)
Nature-principle (*Prakriti*)	&	Spirit-principle (*Purusha*)
Individual Soul (*Jivatma*)	&	Universal Soul (*Paramatma*)
The Phenomenal (*Samsara*)	&	The Enlightened (*Nirvana*)
Cosmic Energy (*Shakti*)	&	Cosmic Consciousness (*Shiva*)
Cosmic Mother (*Yum*)	&	Cosmic Father (*Yab*)
The Formed (*Svarupa*)	&	The Formless (*Arupa*)
Female (*Yoni*)	&	Male (*Linga*)

So it is that the Tantric Yogi and Yogini make use of the underlying dualism of the phenomenal world as the basis for actively and consciously comprehending Reality. In the practice of this Realisation, both inner and outer worlds are made use of on account of their inter-relatedness. All the energies and elements of the Universe are at the disposal of the Tantric Yogi and Yogini. Thus even sexual energy (of enormous

potential) may be released, directed and transformed into the "fire" of knowledge. The contact of the senses with the external makes a "fabric" of ever-changing Reality, which the Tantric learns to experience as an inner awakening....

"What Tantrism tends to do is to take the whole of the psychosomatic constitution of the practicer as the basis for Realisation."

Seyfort Ruegg

The Vajrayana followers were divided into a number of categories for the purpose of receiving instruction, and according to the degree of advancement of the pupil. Such categories are generally taken to be four ... and either one, or sometimes two, will be taken as the "way of life" for the Tantric practice. These four categories are :

(i) *Kriya tantra* : Generally the first class of initiate who must undergo rigorous discipline of diet (extreme vegetarianism, no use of spices or intoxicants) and usually celibacy is required. Exterior modes of *Sadhana* (worship) are used, and the inner faculties developed.

(ii) *Carya tantra* : This initiate receives direct instruction from the Teacher (*Guru*), and will act only according to his requirements. Both ritual and inner practices are emphasised. The Mind is developed and controlled, often by the practice of Sadhana requiring the use of meat, fish, herbs, wine and contact with the Yoginis.

(iii) *Yoga tantra* : Here the initiate is brought within the inner circle of mystic practice. Initiation is by means of the Guru's inner power. Deep meditation is well developed.

(iv) *Anuttarayoga tantra* : This is the Siddha category. The class of the Guru, Here the Void (*Sunyata*) is realised, *Samadhi* maintained, and the occult powers (*Siddhi*) are developed.

The Tantric initiate has the possibility of attaining the highest Realisation, through these various "mystic" initiations. Earnest Desire, Discipline and One-pointed Effort are the only real measures of success. As the obscuring "impurities" are systematically transmuted (alchemically purified) into the "fire" of Knowledge, the Mind is made Firmer, and Cosmic Consciousness is revealed :

"In Vajrayana, if one has a good teacher and one's faculties are ripe, one can within a few years of effort, gain Buddhahood."

Dalai Lama

The Tantras of the Hindu tradition, generally of a later period than the Buddhist, likewise divide the worshippers into similar categories, which are equated thus :

(i) *Vedacharis, Vaishnavacharis* & *Shaivacharis* : Of the *Kriya* tantra type.
(ii) *Dakshinacharis* : Equated with the *Carya* tantra.
(iii) *Vamacharis* : Of the *Yoga* tantra type.
(iv) *Sidhantacharis* & *Kaulacharis* : Similar to the *Anuttarayoga* tantra.

Furthermore, the Hindu tradition, greatly concerned with external "practical" worship (*Puja*), makes a clear distinction between "right-handed" (*Dakshina*) and "left-handed" (*Vama*) *Sadhana* (practice), according to whether or not there is actual physical contact with the ritual "ingredients" (*Pancha-Makara*), which may, according to the Buddhist, be symbolical or actual. Whether or not they are symbolically used, actually used or just "imagined" (visualised), depends upon the tradition, the Guru, and the state of advancement (initiation) of the *Sadhaka*. The five "essences" are Meat, Fish, Grain, Wine and Sexual Union.

"The central Sadhana of Tantrism, Buddhist and Hindu alike, is the exercise of sexual contact under Tantric 'laboratory' conditions. It is irrelevant, in the final analysis, whether these Sadhanas were or are literally performed, or whether they are hypostasized entirely into mental configurations."

Agehananda Bharati

Tantric practices flourished on a grand scale throughout Eastern India until the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the Moslem

invaders laid to waste the great universities and centres of Tantra, slaughtering most of the inhabitants. Many thousands of books, manuscripts, paintings and icons were destroyed. Those who were able escaped to Nepal, Tibet, Assam, Burma, South India, Ceylon and Java. This was the end of the golden age for Tantrism in India . . . only in Tibet, Nepal, and the more remote areas of the Indian Himalaya, were the original Tantric teachings preserved. Recently the Chinese invaders of Tibet have repeated the wholesale destruction of the Tantric books, manuscripts, icons and monasteries.

The influence of Hinduism upon the Tantras is most marked from the time of the Moslem invasions. The great sage Shankaracharya had already strengthened and given life to the Brahmanic (Hindu) philosophy of the eighth century . . . and his expounding of the Vajrayana philosophy in clear Hindu terms had already brought about a great religious revival. That quite a number of "Hindu-Tantra" texts had already appeared before the Moslem invasions indicates that Hinduism was prepared to carry these teachings with the persecution, and resultant disappearance, of Buddhism from India. In the later medieval periods, the Tantric practices became mixed with the pre-Aryan Kapalika, Aghori, Nathist, Shaivite and Shakta rites, and also with the more primitive tribal and animist influences, with the result that the practices became associated with the idea of sacrifice, often of an objectionable kind. Bengal, Assam, Orissa and Bihar still remained centres of practice, though the shortage of really developed teachers (due mainly to the Moslem persecution), and the resultant misinterpretation of the Tantric texts through not understanding the real meaning of the secret Sandhyabhasa language ("twilight-language"), on account of the allegorical style, greatly changed the mode of worship with the result that Tantrism fell into ill repute.

From the thirteenth century to the present day Tantrism has maintained a strong influence on religious practice throughout the East, despite attempts at suppression by the Moslems and the orthodox Hindus. Many Hindu temples house images which trace their origin to the Tantric visualisations, and there are few religious observances which do not have a strong element of Tantric symbolism. In Tibet, Tantra developed along purely Buddhist lines (though the Bon priests adopted the Tantras, they are indistinguishable from the Buddhist)

until the recent Chinese occupation. Bengal has remained a stronghold of the Tantric tradition, though in a modified form strongly influenced by Shaivite, Shakta, Vaishnav and Baul cults. In fact the Bauls still continue the oral tradition of the earliest Tantras. Bengal has produced a formidable line of Tantric Gurus . . . from the earliest of the Siddhas, *Shabaripa, Darikapada,* to the medieval *Raghunatha Siromani, Sri Chaitanya, Krsnananda Agamavagisa, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Bamakepha* and *Sri Aurobindo* to mention only the better known.

Tantrism is still practiced in Assam, Orissa, parts of South India, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan, as well as other parts of the Indian Himalaya. The past decade has shown a tremendous revival in Tantrism among Western countries, probably on account of the psychological and extrasensory implications. In India there are also those who are finding, in the way of the Tantra, a new hope for the future.

"If the intelligent in modern India could view the Tantric tradition with that warm empathy which the builders of Khajuraho and Konarak must have felt, Tantrism in India may well be therapeutical for many cultural ills that beset her today."

Agehananda Bharati

We live in a world of illusion. By practice of Tantra Yoga it is possible to absorb the illusion and transmute it into a Conscious Reality. Consciousness is what we are aiming for, and it may be attained by correctly mixing the basic factors. Mankind has already passed through three time-cycles, and we find ourselves well into the fourth. *Satya-Yuga,* the Golden Age of Enlightenment has passed, so have *Treta-Yuga* and *Dvapara-Yuga.* We now find ourselves in *Kali-Yuga,* recognisable when :

"society reaches a stage where property confers rank, wealth the source of virtue, passion the bond between husband and wife, falsehood the source of success, sex the only enjoyment, and when outer trappings are confused with inner religion."

Vishnu Purana

According to the Tantric philosophy, there are a number of important questions which we should attempt to answer during our stay on earth.

Among the most urgent are the fundamental :

"Who am I?"
"Where am I from?"
"Where am I going?"

Tantric text

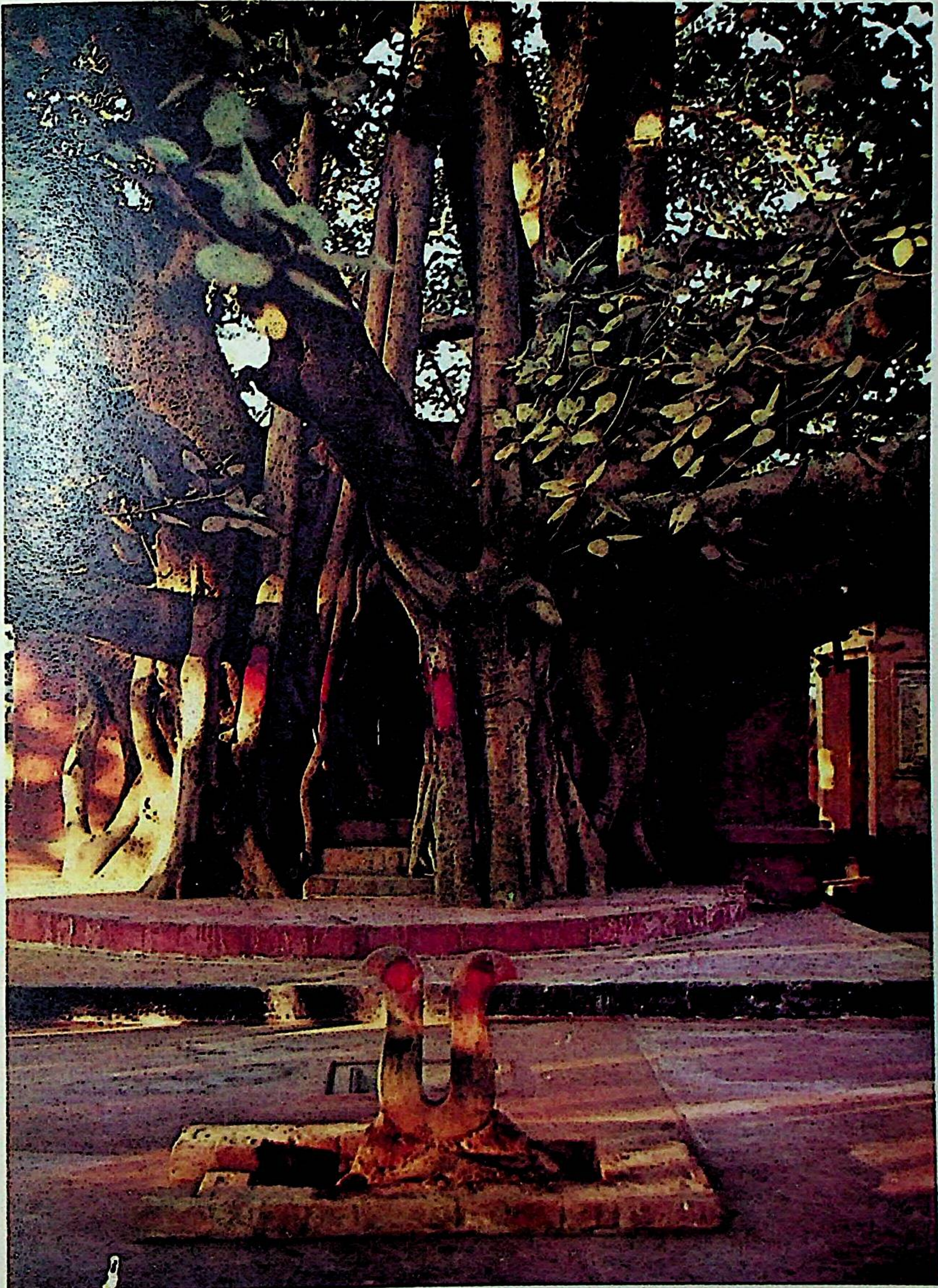
The *Hevajra tantra* beautifully declares :

"The whole of existence arises in me,
In me arises the threefold world,
By me pervaded is this all,
Of naught else does this world consist."



"He who knows the Pipal tree, with roots in the Primal Being, whose trunk is Brahma, and whose leaves are the Vedas, is a Knower of the Real Meaning of the Vedas."

Gita



Holy Tree

Nandikesuri Pitth Scainthia, Bengal.

"Oh Eternal One . . . who art the Energy of Creation, Maintenance and Destruction : Who art the abode of All Qualities, and yet are beyond all qualities . . . Reverence to Thee."

Ambika



Navel of Sati
Nandikesuri Pitth Scainthia, Bengal.

"Thou art the Atom and ever-pervading, Thou art the Whole Universe, no praise of Thee is sufficient."

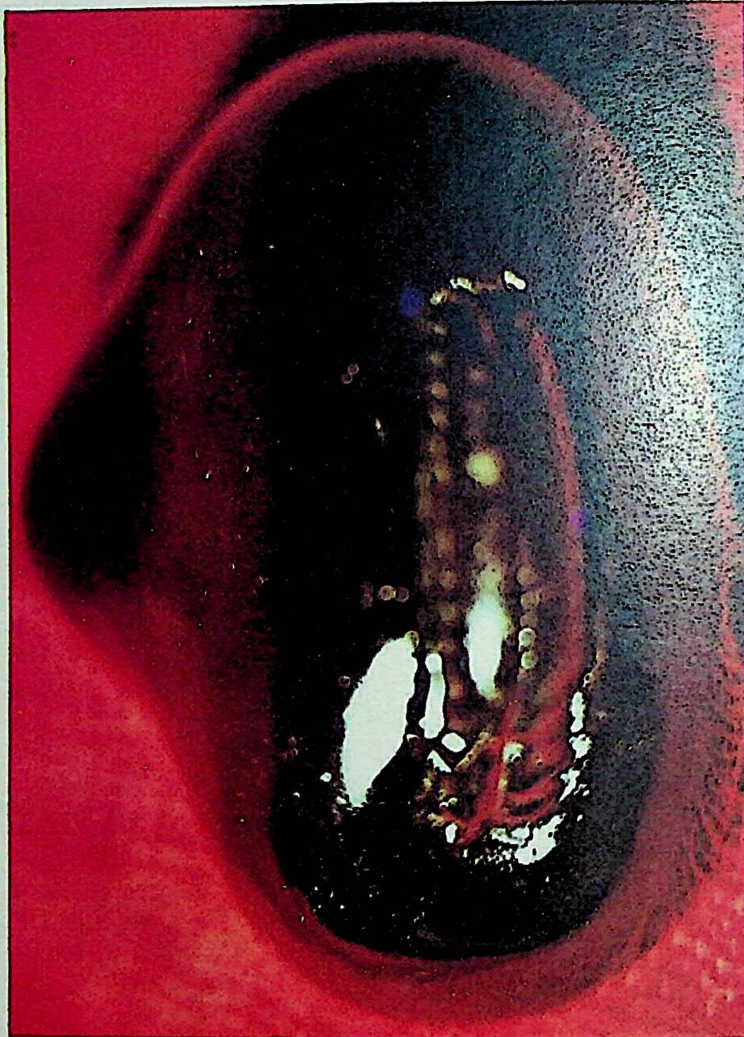
Triputa-stotram



108 Lingams
Tanjore, South India.

"Origin of the world Thou art, Yet hast Thou Thyself no origin."

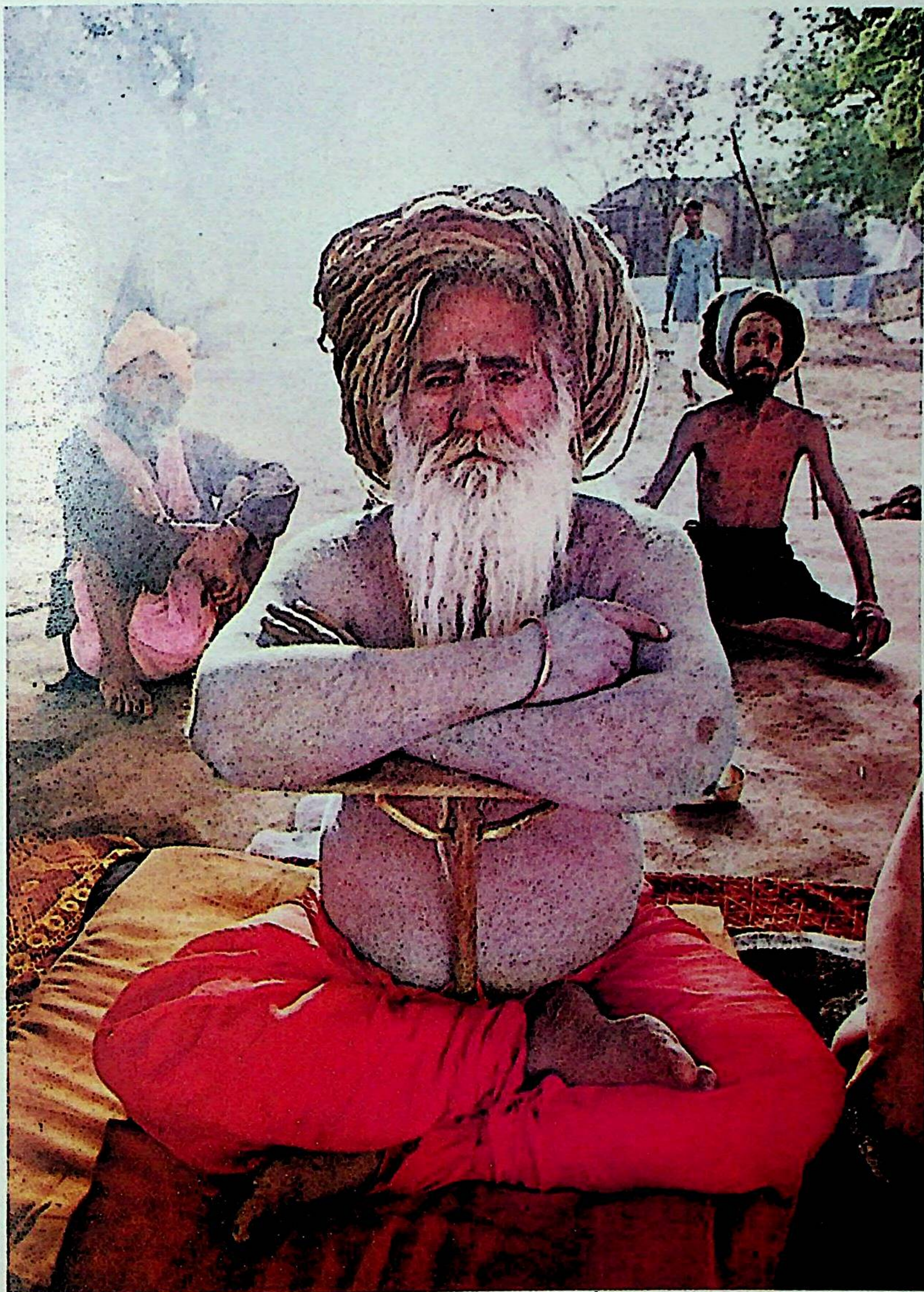
Bhairavi stotra



Salagrama (Prehistoric)
Symbol of Vishnu *(Narayana)*, The Creator, Maintainer and Destroyer of the Universe : (Private collection).

"He is called the holder of the trident *(Tri-danda)*, in whose reason control of speech, control of body, and control of mind are fixed."

Manu-smrti



Shiva.

A modern Guru of ancient tradition, resting on a "T-staff" *(Hamsa-danda)* body smeared with cremation ashes, hair long and matted, wearing the red cloth of a Tantric.

"Though one should live a hundred years without seeing the deathless state, yet better indeed is the single day's life of one who sees the deathless state."

Dhammapada



Fasting Buddha

Gautama Buddha underwent rigorous disciplines as an ascetic-Yogi of the ancient Tantric tradition. Gandhara sculpture: *circa* 4th century A.D.: (Private collection).

"Whatever is born will die;
Whatever is joined will part."

Naropa .



Skull Altar
Tara-Pitth, Bengal.

"Vouchsafe your 'Gift-waves', O Gurus, that all things visible and existing may dawn upon me in the form of Deities.

"Vouchsafe your 'Gift-waves' that the vital-force may enter the median-nerve."

"Vouchsafe your 'Gift-waves' that the ecstatic warmth of the psychic-heart may blaze up."

"Vouchsafe your 'Gift-waves' that the impure illusory body may be transmuted . . ."

The Yoga of the Six Doctrines



Guru Rimpoche

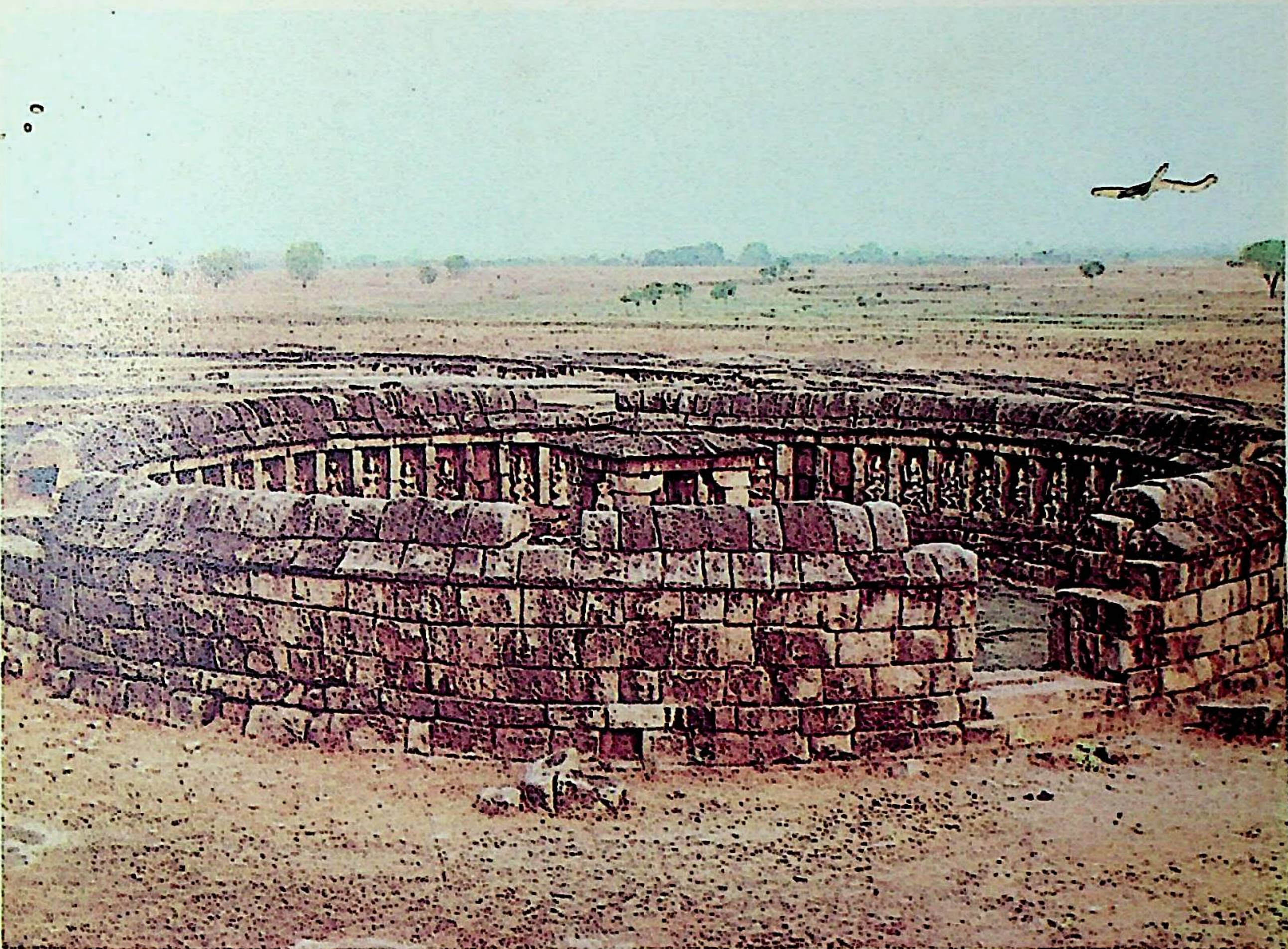
(Siddha Padmasambhava)

Founder of the "Red Hat" *(Nyingmapa)* original school of Tantric Buddhism in Tibet.

Tibetan Thanka : Silk applique, gold brocade. *Circa* 18th century : (Private collection).

"*Chakra* is an assembly of Divinities, which purifies the spheres of sense and so on, and thus is void as space."

Hevajra tantra



Rhanipur Jharial 64-Yogini Pitth

Orissa : *Circa* 8th century A.D.

Front view, showing the "Omnipresent" Shiva Bhairav (centre) in dancing posture, surrounded by his "troupe" of *Yogini-Shaktis* (Energies). He is *Bindu*, the centre of the *Mandala*.

"The thirty-two veins of Hevajra's body are equated with the Yoginis, two to each."

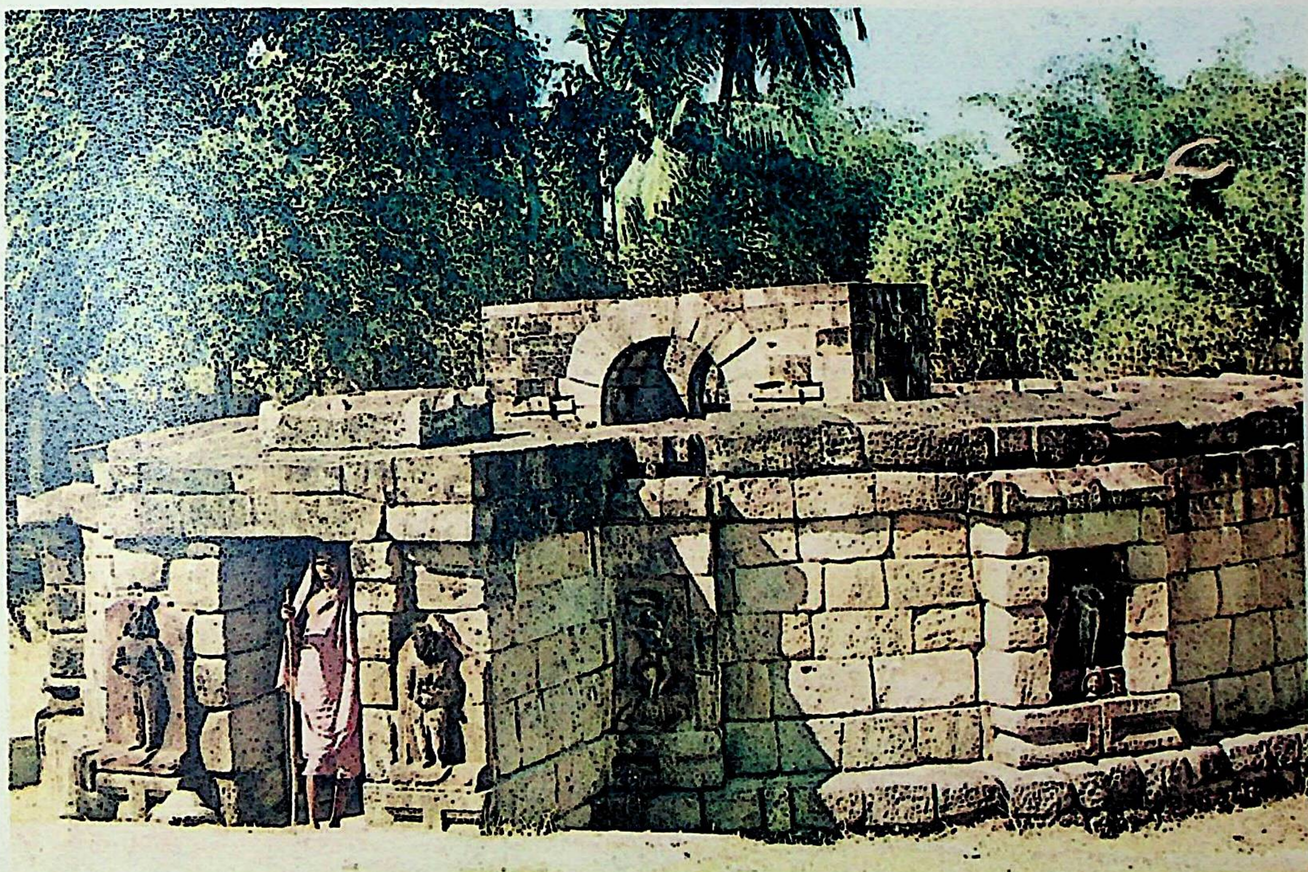
Hevajra tantra



Rhanipur Jharial 64-Yogini Pitth
Orissa : *Circa* 8th century A.D.
Founded according to the *Sahaja* school of the Siddha Matsyendra Nath for the *Kaula* initiations of the mystic *Mandala* of the "Transformation-centre" (*Manipura Chakra* : centered around the navel).

"This gem of the *Samsara,* possessed of the properties of the five desires, becomes like poison in its unpurified state, but when purified, it becomes ambrosia."

Hevajra tantra



Hirapur 64-Yogini Pitth

Orissa : *Circa* 10th century A.D.

Smaller than the Rhanipur Pitth, and in the same region as Konarak, this temple abounds in exquisite sculptures of the *Yoginis,* and the guardians. Tradition tells us that the Siddha Matsyendra Nath, like Jonah, was swallowed by a huge fish, and while inside its stomach, he overheard *Shiva* talking to *Gauri* (one of his *Matrika-Shaktis*) about Tantra-Yoga. Matsyendra survived to spread the message.

"What is here, is elsewhere.
What is not here, is nowhere."

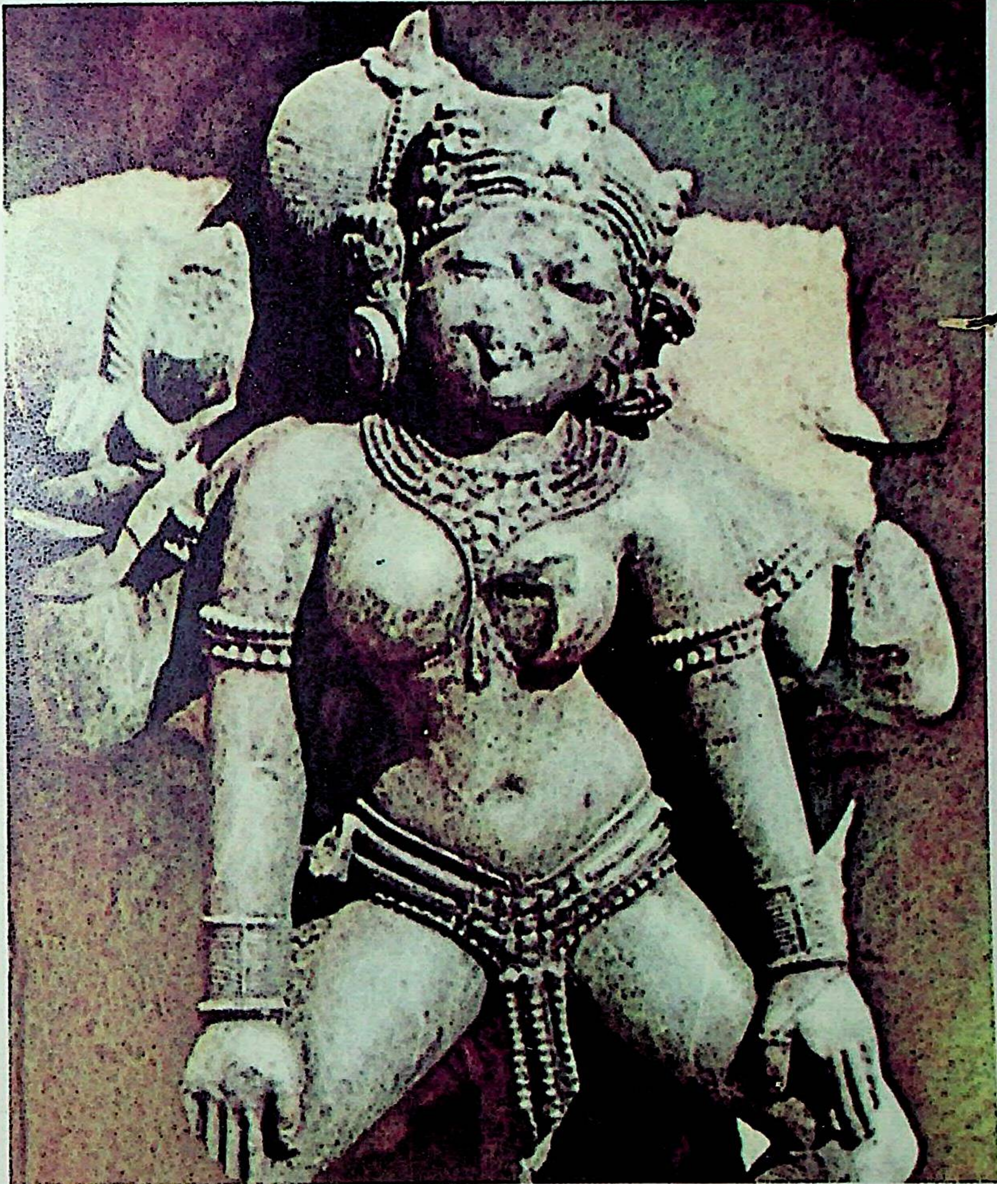
Vishvasara tantra



Ajaikapada Bhairava
(Chandi Mandapa)
Hirapur Yogini-Pitth Stone sculpture : Pala style.

"Song symbolises Mantra, and dance means Meditation. So "singing" and "dancing" the Yogin always acts."

Hevajra tantra



Yogini-Shakti, Hirapur

In dance posture, with body adorned with the five symbolic ornaments (Crown : *Aksobhya*, Necklace : *Ratnasambhava*, Ear-rings : *Amitabha*, Bracelets : *Vairocana*, and Girdle : *Amoghasiddhi*) of the initiatory Mandala, she smiles with the Joy of Blissfulness *(Mahasukha)*, and sounds the *Damaru* (Drum) of cosmic vibration. Chlorite-Schist sculpture of Pala style.

"Wisdom is symbolised by the *Khatvanga,* and Means is symbolised by the drum."

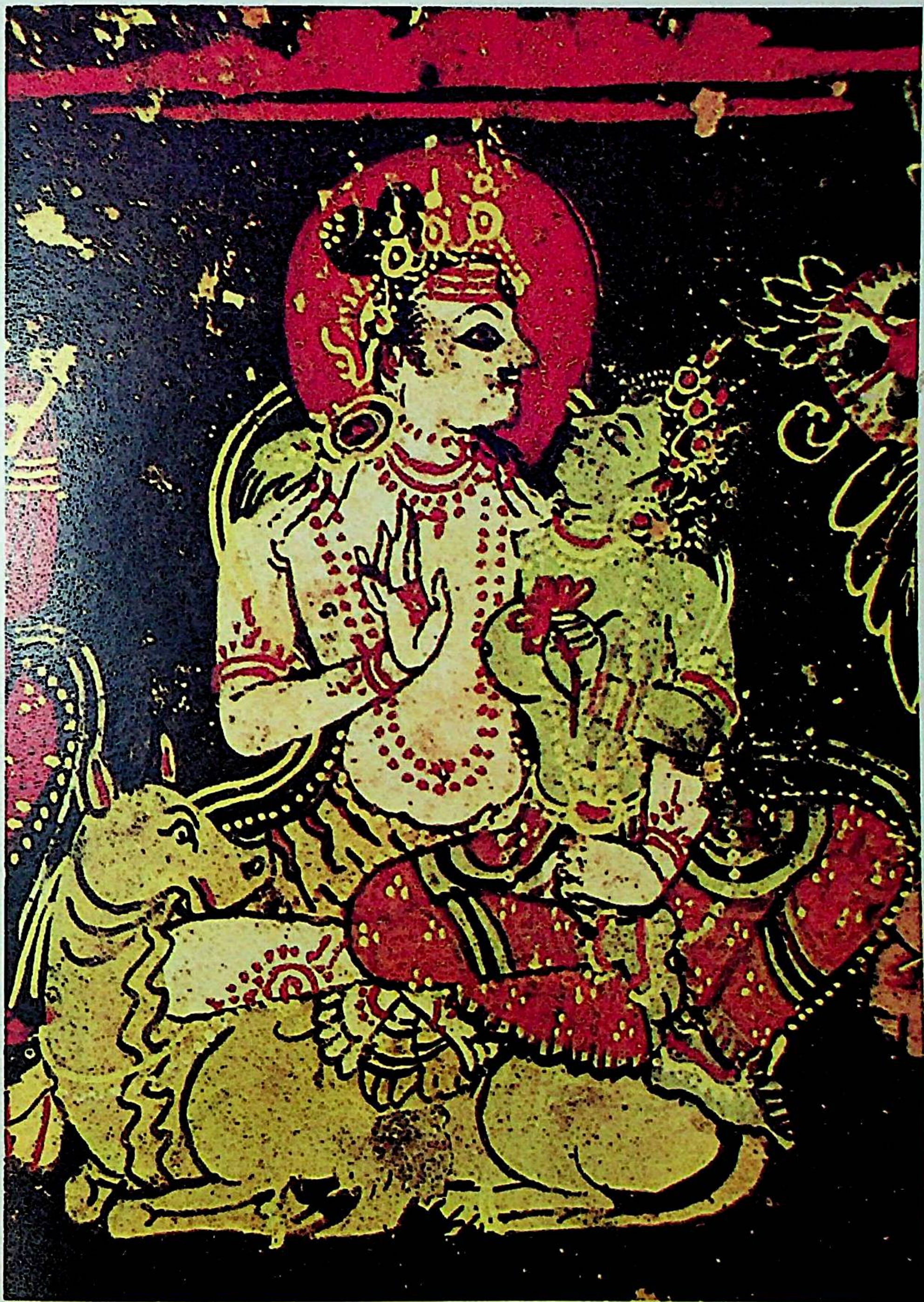
Hevajra tantra



Shiva Bhairav : Guardian *(Dwarpal)* of the Maha-Jageshwar temple, Kumaon Himalayas. He stands on the bull *(Vahana)*, holds the staff *(Khatvanga)* surmounted by a skull ... representing the "Mt Meru" *(Avadhuti)* of the subtle body, the Drum *(Damaru)* representing inner vibration *(Mantra)*, the *Brahmanda*-Egg of Primeval Matter, and is "garlanded" with the *Matrika* (Matrix) letters of cosmic sound.

"He who is white as camphor, whose raiment is Space, whose Shakti holds a red lotus ... Master of Yogis."

Mahanirvana tantra



Shiva and Shakti in Tantric *Asana* (Posture), seated on *Nandi* (the Bull), and wearing the signs *(Mudra)* of Yoga practice.
Nepalese manuscript, *Circa* 17th century : (Private collection).

"Oh Kali, wife of Shiva, Thou art Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. Thou art all. Thou art One and Beneficent. What can be said in praise of Thee, Oh Mother? Of Thy mercy show favour towards me, helpless as I am. By Thy grace may I never be reborn."

Karpuradi stotra



The Goddess Tara in terrifying (Yet compassionate) aspect as Mahavidya-Kali. . .standing on the corpse of Shiva. Dudhkalan Mandir, Bengal : Contemporary. This terrifying aspect is especially popular among Hindu Tantric Bengalis.

CHAPTER II

Cosmology and the Evolution of Consciousness

Ancient Indian Cosmology (Vedic and Samkhya) tells us that the Universe is a combination of two principles :

The Spirit-principle *(Purusha)* and the Nature-principle *(Prakriti)*. The Spirit-principle *(Purusha)* manifests as *Paramatma* (The Universal Soul) and *Jivatma* (The Individual Soul) . . .

"Beyond the senses is the mind, and beyond mind is reason, its essence. Beyond reason is the Spirit in man, and beyond this is the Spirit of the Universe, the evolver of all. And beyond is *Purusha*, all-pervading, beyond definition. When a mortal knows him, liberation is attained . . ."

Katha Upanishad

"*Jivatmas* are many, *Paramatma* is One."

Gita

The *Shakti* (Power, Energy) of *Purusha* is *Prakriti*. In the original state *Prakriti* (Nature-principle) gives rise to *Mahattattva* (cosmic Intelligence-principle) which produces "Cosmic-Ego" and "Cosmic-Mind". The Mahattattva, the Cosmic-Ego and the Cosmic-Mind are three phases of One principle.

Cosmic-Ego manifests as the *Tanmatras* . . . Space (Ether), Air, Fire, Water and Earth. These are the traditional Great Elements which form the basis of the phenomenal world :

"Wherefrom do all these worlds come? They come from space. All beings arise from space and into space they return : space is indeed their beginning, and space is their final end."

Chandogya Upanishad

"From space came air. From air, fire. From fire, water. From water came solid earth. From earth came living plants. From plants food and seed : and from food and seed came a living Being, man."

Taittiriya Upanishad

By interaction ("Divine play") of Prakriti with Purusha (Spirit-principle) the five senses of perception, the five objects of the senses of perception and the five organs of action develop as an incarnate Being . . .

"The five subtle elements, the ego, the intellect, Primordial matter, the ten organs, the mind and the five objects of sense . . . these are the very principles of the material universe."

Gita

"Consciousness may exist having matter as its means, matter as its object, matter as its support and seeking delight it may grow, increase and develop . . . Consciousness may exist having sensation as its means, perception as its means, or mental formations as its means, mental formations as its object, mental formations as its support, and seeking delight it may grow, increase and develop . . ."

Gautama Buddha

The Universal Soul *(Paramatma)* has two aspects. These are :

Saguna-aspect : Paramatma as united with Prakriti, originator of the three modes (*Gunas*) of *Sattva* (Awakening), *Rajas* (Activity) and *Tamas* (Destruction).

Nirguna-aspect : Devoid of Gunas . . . The Absolute aspect . . . ISHWARA.

The *Saguna*-aspect of the *Paramatma*, has two characteristics :

(i) That with Form.
(ii) The Formless.

Ishwara (Supreme Purusha) declares in the Bhagavad Gita :

"My Prakriti in her Primordial undeveloped state is the womb of all creatures. In that I place the seed of consciousness. The birth of all things follows from the combination of Matter and Spirit : Of all the bodies that take birth from different wombs, this Primordial Matter is the Mother, and I am the procreating Father."

Gita

This is the essence of the Tantric Cosmology. There is no permanent individual self, soul or spirit. What is known as an individual, is only a combination of ever-changing physical and subtle forces. The Spirit-principle *(Purusha)* and the Nature-principle *(Prakriti)* interact continually :

"When This is, That is.
This arising, That arises;
When This is not, That is not.
This ceasing, That ceases."

Gautama Buddha

This interaction, or "creative potentiality" produces what is termed *Samsara,* which alchemically precipitates as *Karma-formations,* experienced as *Karma*. Karma has subtle, gross and Spiritual effect. It is the experience of life.

While Samsara is movement, *Nirvana* is static, indescribable, and Blissful . . .

"Nirvana is the extinction of the false idea of Self", yet the Tantras declare Nirvana and Samsara as inseparable.

The Tantras are concerned with Enlightenment . . .

". . . there is no difference between *samsara* and *nirvana,* either as to dignity or as to substance. *Tathata,* the sheer 'suchness' is made manifest both ways, and for true enlightenment the apparent difference is non-existent."

Heinrich Zimmer

It is the "obscuring factor", subtle, gross and Spiritual, that develops as the "individual self", producing a condition of cosmic dis-harmony that the Tantric Yogi and Yogini attempt to overcome by practice of a way of life that will consciously weave into a Creative and Blissful "fabric".

"Human unhappiness results from mankind's acceptance to the lowest conditions of our own minds. By the practice of Yoga, this condition can be overcome."

Patanjali

To know *Nirvana* is to know things as they are in Reality.

Nirvana is the "un-obscured" state. The concept (dichotomy) of

an "Individual-Self" obscures the consciousness, separates mankind from harmonious Reality, through the activity of the three *Gunas* . . .

Sattva is "Awakening"	:	The ascending force of the Prakriti-nature, which, interacting with the *Saguna*-aspect of the *Paramatma purusha*, manifests as consciousness.
Rajas is "Activity"	:	The "play" (*Lila*) of the phenomenal world of *Maya* . . . and its expansion and manifestation as Natural properties.
Tamas is "Dissolution"	:	"Destruction", "Impermanence", the "returning-to-source", the underlying fundamental of all phenomenal activity.

This triad manifests throughout the Tantric revelations :

The Tri-worlds of	Bhur (Earth) Bhuvah (Heaven) Svar (Space)
The Three "regions" of	Kamadhatu (Desire) Rupadhatu (Form) Arupadhatu (Formless)
The Three "bodies" of	Dharma-kaya (Self-existent) Sàmbhoga-kaya (Glorious) Nirmana-kaya (Transformed)
The three body-humors of	Vayu (Space & Air aggregate) Pitta (Fire aggregate) Kaph (Water and Earth aggregate)
The Subtle "pathways" of	Ida-nadi (to the left) Pingala-nadi (to the right) Sushumna-nadi (in the centre)
The Basis of	Sunyata (Voidness) Vijnana (Consciousness) Mahasukha (Blissfulness)

". . . He is without change, self-existent, and ever the same, serene, above all attributes. He beholds and is the Witness of all that is, Omnipresent, the Self of everything that is. He, the Eternal and Omnipresent, is hidden and pervades all things. Though himself devoid of senses, He is the illuminator of all the senses and their powers. The Cause

of all the three worlds, He is yet beyond them and the mind of men. Ineffable and Omniscient, He knows the Universe, yet none know Him. He sways this incomprehensible universe, and all that has movement and is motionless in the three worlds depends on Him; and depending on His reality, the world of forms appears as true. We too have come from Him as our Cause. He, the One Supreme Lord, is the Cause of all beings the Manifestation of Whose creative energy in the three worlds is called *Brahma*."

Mahanirvana tantra

"He who sees the *Brahman*, who is Truth, Knowledge, Bliss and the One, is by his very nature, One with Brahman ..."

Mahanirvana tantra

"... the term *Tathata*, 'suchness', represents the utterly positive aspect of Nirvana-enlightenment, the only real state or essence, not to be undone or dissolved. All other states of conciousness are built up and dissolved again."

Heinrich Zimmer

"... the state *Tathata* is indestructable; for it is at once the experience and the reality of the Absolute. And it is termed 'adamantine' (*Vajra*); for it is not to be split, disintegrated, dissolved ..."

Heinrich Zimmer

"Of firm essence, unfragmented, unbreakable, indivisible in character, incombustible, indestructible, Voidness (*Sunyata*) is *Vajra*."

Advayavajrasamgraha

It is quite clear that, though superficial differences exist between the pure-Hindu (Brahmanic) and pure-Buddhist (Vajrayana) Tantras, especially of the activity-assignments (Activity or Passivity to the Male or Female principles), the psychological basis of the "mechanism" of both types of Tantra, is identical. Outside of the realm of duality, there is no difference.

"Brahman willed that it should be so, and brought forth out of himself the material cause of the universe; from this came the primal energy, and from the primal energy mind, from mind the subtle elements, from the subtle elements the many worlds, and from the acts performed by beings in the many worlds, the chain of cause and effect."

Mundaka Upanishad

The phenomenal world is *Maya* ... this Sanskrit word, derived from the root *MA*, meaning "to shape, produce or create". Maya is the illusion of the phenomenal world, brought about through the *Shakti*-

Shiva "play" (*Lila*) manifesting from the Primal Formless Substance into the *Tattvas* :

Akasha	(Ether)
Vayu	(Air)
Tejas	(Fire)
Toya	(Water)
Prithivi	(Earth)
Rupa	(Form)
Gandha	(Smell)
Sabda	(Sound)
Rasa	(Taste)
Sparsa	(Touch)

"At the time of destruction, the whole universe is reabsorbed into this power of creative illusion (maya) and the world's nature (prakriti), which is identical with creative illusion (maya), and is itself reabsorbed into Divinity (Ishwara)."

Hariharanand Saraswati

Yoga teachings tell us that our "consciousness-principle" is made up of five "sheaths", called *Kosha* . . .

(i) Ananda-Maya-Kosha : The Blissful Consciousness of Reality.
(ii) Vijnana-Maya-Kosha : The Subconsciousness.
(iii) Mano-Maya-Kosha : Ordinary Human Consciousness.
(iv) Prana-Maya-Kosha : "Vitality" or Subtle Consciousness.
(v) Anna-Maya-Kosha : Physical Consciousness.

With the precipitation of the five *Koshas* is formed the "obscuring factor", manifesting as ignorance. Gautama Buddha, after his Realisation, outlined the characteristics and tendencies of conditioned-ignorance in a formula which has become referred to as "the conditioned-Genesis". Here it is :

(i) *Avidya* : Unconscious Will (Ignorance) produces *Ego-illusion*.
(ii) *Samsara* : Ego-illusion manifesting as Conformations (The shaping of physical and mental formlessness), produces *Karma-formations*.

(iii) *Vijnana*	:	Karma-formations give rise to *Being-Consciousness.*
(iv) *Nama-rupa*	:	Being-Consciousness produces *mental* and *physical phenomena.*
(v) *Sadayatana*	:	Mental and Physical phenomena produce the "*sense-surfaces*" (Faculties).
(vi) *Sparsa*	:	The faculties produce *sensorial* and *mental Contact.*
(vii) *Vedana*	:	Sensorial and Mental contact produces *Mental* and *Physical Sensation,* and *Feeling.*
(viii) *Trishna*	:	Sensation and Feeling produce *Desire* (Craving).
(ix) *Upadana*	:	Craving produces *Clinging* (to the world).
(x) *Bhava*	:	Clinging produces *Becoming* (Birth, Life).
(xi) *Jati*	:	Becoming produces *Rebirth.*
(xii) *Jaramarana*	:	Rebirth produces *Decay* (through the activity of the three Gunas) and *Death.*

"Our view holds that there is actual continuity of the Individual life (Sattva) between death and rebirth. And this identity of being is supported by the doctrine of *Ekotibhava,* which word, according to its Tibetan etymology means 'to become one uninterruptedly'."

L.A. Waddell

According to the Tibetan "Book of the Dead" *(Bardo Thodol),* the Consciousness-principle takes up to four days to separate from the physical body, once the "death-process" has started. Then, for a period of up to forty-nine days and nights, the spirit will experience the Bardos (Intermediate states) until the Transference of Consciousness is completed :

"... there are seven degrees of Maya (Illusion) within the Samsara (Phenomenal), constituted as seven globes of a planetary chain. On each globe there are seven rounds of evolution, making the forty-nine (seven times seven) stations of active existence. As in the embryonic state in the human species the foetus passes through every form of organic structure from the amoeba to man, the highest mammal, so in the after-death state, the embryonic state of the psychic world, the Knower or principle of consciousness, anterior to its re-emergence in gross matter, analogously experiences purely psychic conditions."

Evans-Wentz

There are six stages of Bardo :

(i) Skyes-nas Bardo	:	The normal consciousness of being born into the human world.
(ii) Rmi-lam Bardo	:	Dream consciousness.
(iii) Bsam-gtan Bardo	:	Trance (Meditation) consciousness.
(iv) Hchhi-kha Bardo	:	The experiencing of Death.
(v) Chhos-nyid Bardo	:	The experiencing of Reality.
(vi) Srid-pa Bardo	:	The state of Rebirth-consciousness.

"... what we call birth is really the reverse side of death, like one of the two sides of a coin, or like a door which we call 'entrance' from outside and 'exit' from inside a room."

Lama Govinda

The three last Bardos (Hchhi-kha, Chhos-nyid & Srid-pa) are the ones experienced by the spirit during the death-cycle. Consciousness-transference can be either Conscious or, more usually, Unconscious ...

"... those Yogis who are advanced in understanding can make the best use of the Transference at the moment of death. They need not traverse the Intermediate State, but will depart by the Great Straight-Upward Path."

Bardo Thodol

"Transference is recognized in all Sutras and Mantra-texts. However, in the three lower Tantra sections (Kriya, Carya & Yoga tantras) and in the Sutras it is said to be the behaviour corresponding to one's status after rebirth in a pure realm by having sent up one's spirituality-mentality through the fontanel opening ..."

Naropa

Unconscious Consciousness-transference is the "normal" process of dis-integration (subtly manifested by the "appearance" of the Elements in Primal form) and re-integration (influenced by the Samsaric bonds of Karma). This is the process of Rebirth, the essential basis of all Eastern mysticism and philosophy. Conscious Consciousness-transference, attainable only to the highest *(Anuttarayoga tantra)* initiate, has been the most well-kept secret of all orders of Yogis. More than mere "mystic theorizing" it is the practical means of overcoming *totally* the "obscuring factors" of conditioned consciousness ....

"Thine own consciousness, shining, void, and inseperable from the Great Body of Radiance, hath no birth, nor death, and is the Immutable Light . . ."

"Knowing this is sufficient. Recognizing the voidness of thine own intellect to be Buddhahood; and looking upon it as being thine own consciousness, is to keep thyself in the divine mind of the Buddha."

Chikhai Bardo

"When one perceives Dependent Arising as the void and the void as Dependent Arising, then with Insight one perceives the essence of all Lord Buddhas discourses."

Dalai Lama

Owing to the dualistic nature of "unconscious-incarnation" we find ourselves bound by obscuring factors. These derive from the *Tamas* mode of the *Gunas*, interacting between the *Purusha* and *Prakriti* principles. It precipitates as a very definite separation between Intellect and Emotion . . . "head" and "heart" . . . "Spiritual" and "Material". It is this which is blended together in the practice of Tantra-Yoga, the first basis of which is a firm philosophy.

"Mere suffering exists, but no sufferer is found. The deeds are, but no doer is there . . ."

Buddhaghosa

"My 'mind' is such that it is bereft of all phenomenal existence, 'elements' and 'bases' and of such thought categories as subject and object. It is without beginning and has the nature of Sunya."

Guhyasamaja

"There is a light that shines beyond all things on earth, beyond us all, beyond the heavens, beyond the highest, the very highest heavens. This is the Light that shines in our heart."

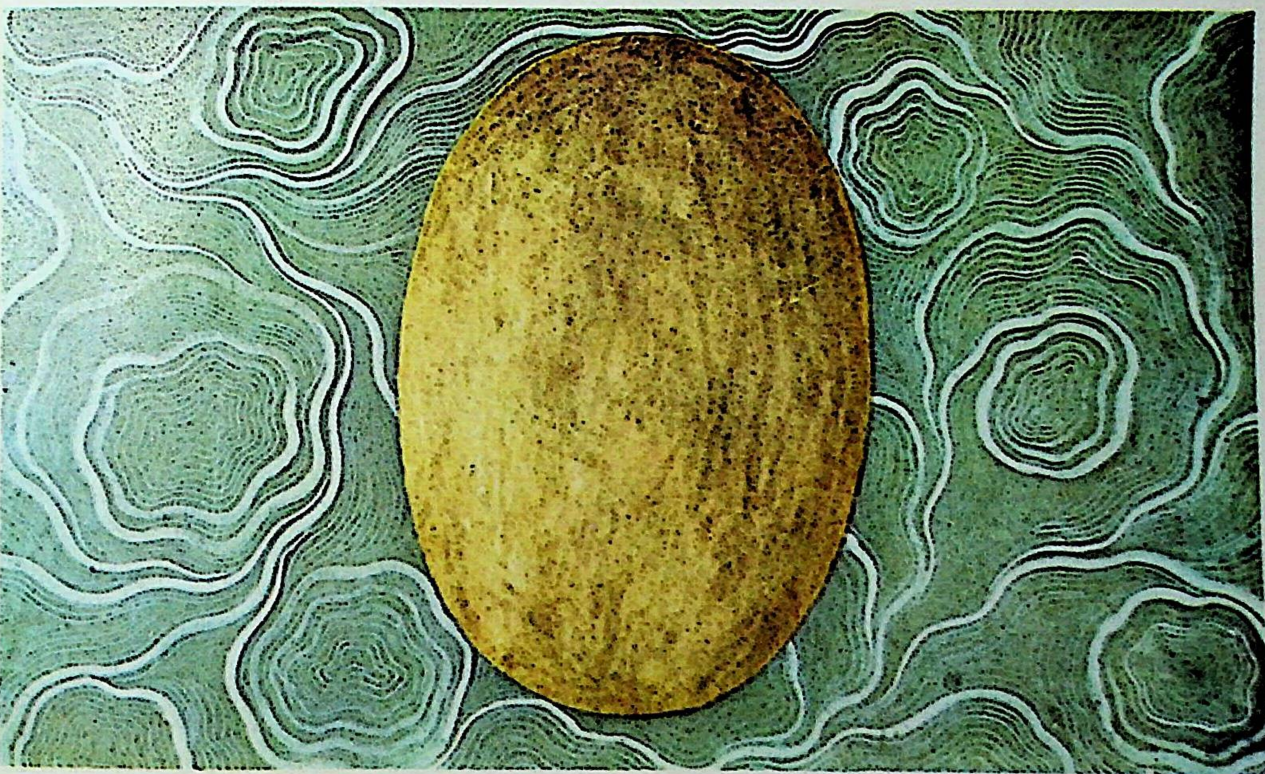
Chandogya Upanishad

"Nothing is mentally produced in the highest bliss, and no one produces it,
There is no bodily form, neither object nor subject,
Neither flesh nor blood, neither dung nor urine,
No sickness, no delusion, no purification,
No passion, no wrath, no delusion, no envy,
No malignity, no conceit of self, no visible object,
Nothing mentally produced and no producer,
No friend is there, no enemy,
Calm is the Innate and Undifferentiated."

Hevajra tantra

"He, having meditated, desiring to produce beings from His Body, first put forth the waters: In these He placed the seed, That became a Golden Egg, equal in radiance to the Sun. In that was born Brahma himself, Grandsire of all worlds."

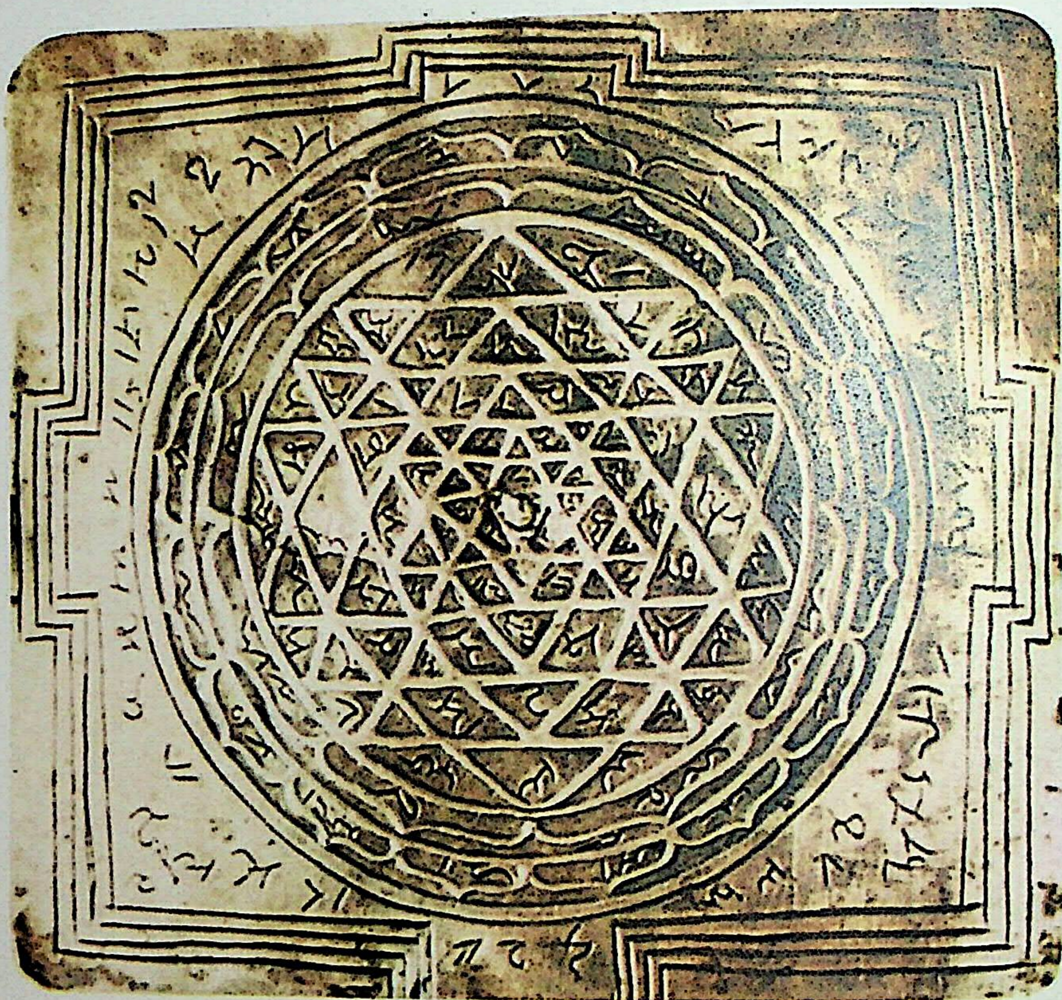
Manu-smrti



The Golden Egg
Hiranya-Garbha : Painting Kangra School, *Circa* : 19th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

"As the spider sends forth and retracts its web, as in earth herbs will grow, as from a living man the hairs appear, so from the Indestructible the Universe comes."

Mundak Upanishad

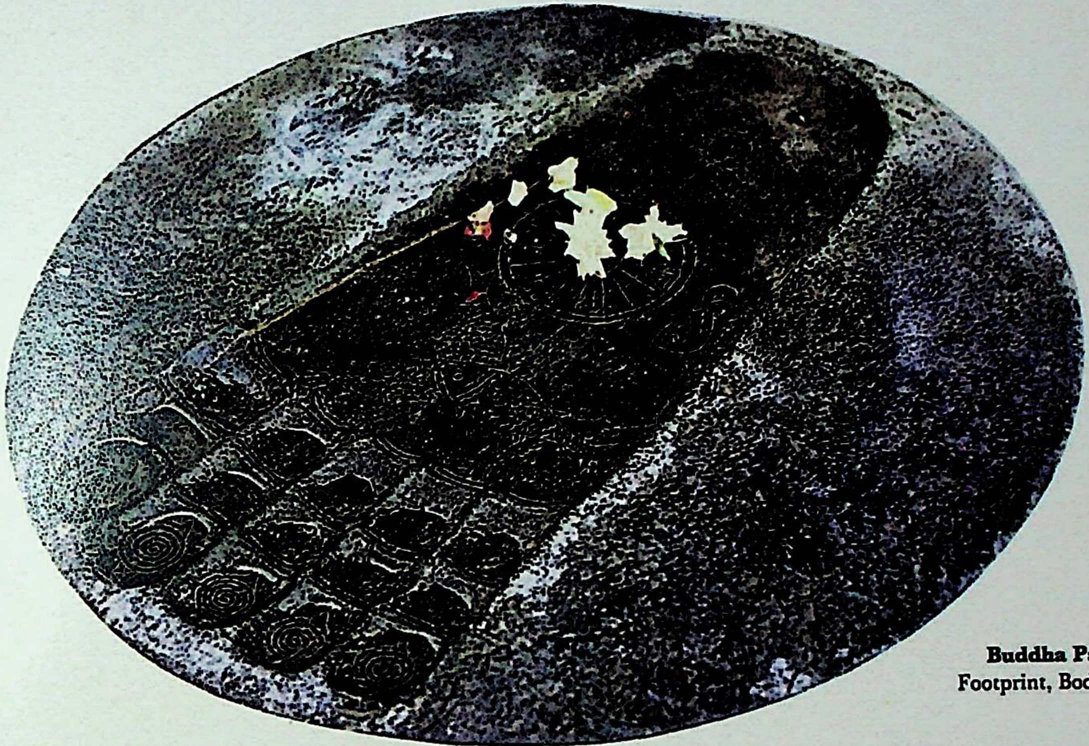


Sri Yantra

Continuity is Tantra, here represented geometrically. There are four "gates" to this "temple", four "thresholds" at the directions, leading to an inner "lotus-sanctuary" and the *Mandala* within. Four upward-pointing triangles are the *Shiva*-principle, Five downward-pointing the *Shakti*-principle. Then there are the *Bijas*, (seed-syllables) and the 43 produced forms (Triangles), all emanating from the centre *(Bindu* : Point). This is the *Pitth* (Holy Seat) of the Divinity *(Devata)*, which may be invoked by means of this *Yantra*...Benares 17th century : Gold on Copper (Private collection)

"A *Mandala* is a footprint."

Hevajra tantra



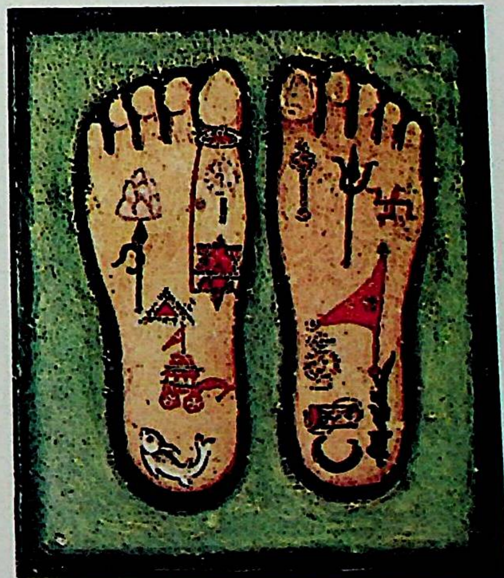
Buddha Pada
Footprint, Bodhgaya.

"Oh Mother, there are 56 rays of Earth, 52 of Water, 62 of Fire, 54 of Air, 72 of Ether and 64 of Mind, but Thy two lotus-feet shine above them all."

Anandalahari

Footprints
"Purusha and Prakriti"
(Private Collection)

Both the *Buddha Pada* (Footprint), and the "Feet of the Devi", carry the "Glorious Emblems" of Bodhisattvahood. These signs have various interpretation, and figure symbolically as the "ingredients" of many Tantric *Sadhanas* (Practices). They are the Fish *(Matsya)*, Umbrella *(Chatra)*, Conch *(Sankha)*, Diagram *(Srivasta)*, Banner *(Dhvaja)*, Vase *(Kalasha)*, Lotus *(Padma)* and Wheel *(Chakra)*.



"By sustained effort, earnestness, discipline and self-control, let the wise man make for himself an island which no flood overwhelms."

Shakyamuni : Dhammapada



"Cosmic Father"

The Buddha Shakyamuni

"The Enlightened One"

Tibet Thanka (Detail), Gold and silk applique with pearl, *Circa* 18th century : (Private Collection).

"... and may Thy benign face always beam on us and appear large like the waxing moon in forwarding our heart's desire of admission to the heavenly circle and *Nirvana*."

from : "*Prayer to Tara*"



"Cosmic Mother"

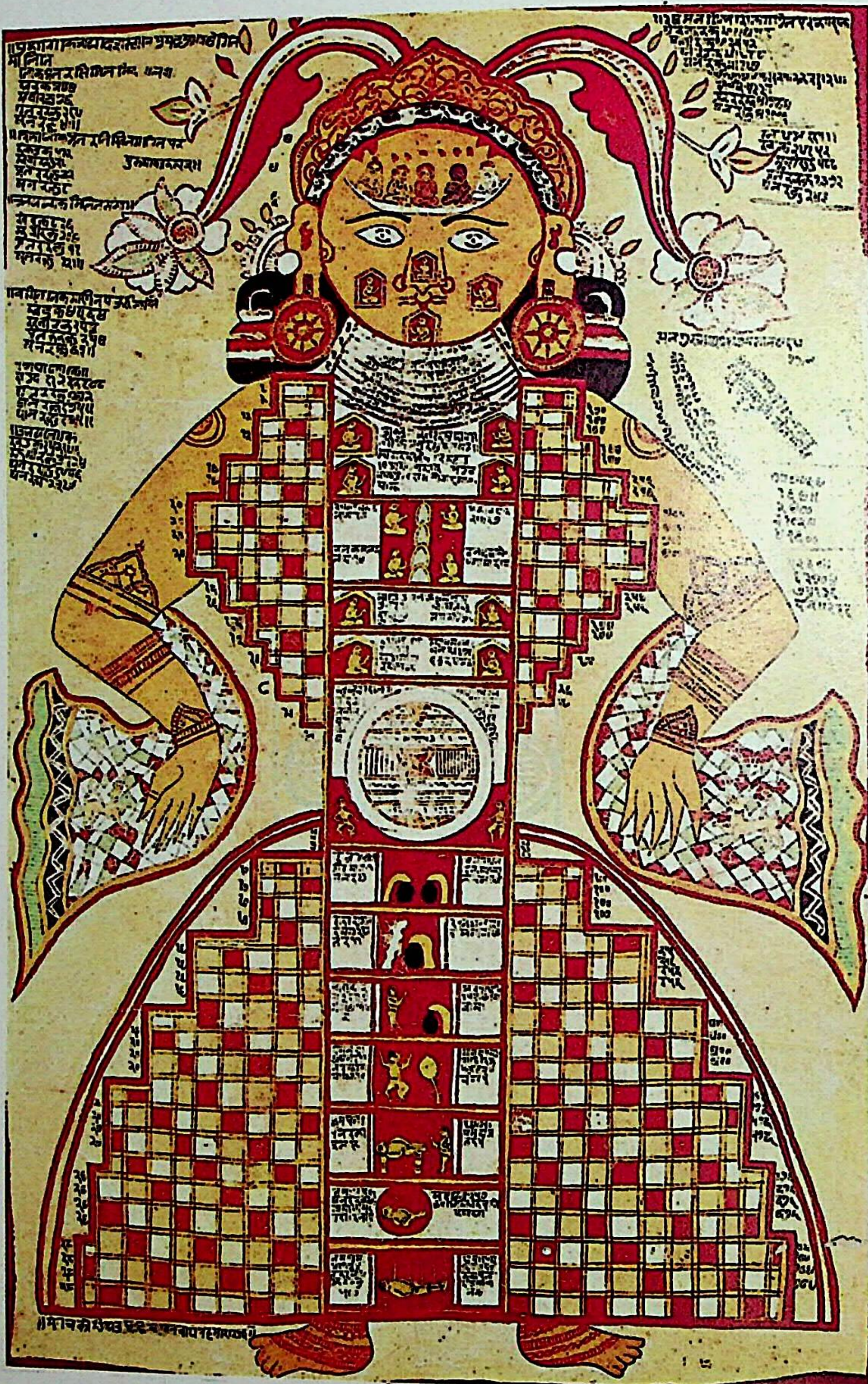
Tara

(Mother of the Tathagatas)

Tibet Thanka (Detail), gold and silk applique with pearl. 18th Century: (Private Collection).

"Above the earth is *Bhur-loka*, then *Bhuvar-loka* beyond. Then next is *Svar-loka*, and *Jana-loka* beyond. Yet beyond is *Tapo-loka*, and again beyond *Satya-loka*. Beyond again is *Brahma-loka*, like burning Gold."

Devi Bhagavata



Universal Man

(Purushakara Yantra) **showing the seven ascending and seven descending planes** *(loka)* **of experience.**
Painting, Rajasthan *Circa* **18th century : (Private Collection).**

"By the Union of Shiva and Shakti, Creation comes . . . All in this Universe is of Shiva and Shakti."

Kulacudamani Nigama



Shiva and Shakti
(Cosmic Consciousness and Cosmic Energy) Vakreshwar Pitth, Bengal, Pala period.

"There are thirty-two veins in the Vajra-body. These bear *Bodhicitta*, and flow into the place of Great Bliss."

Hevajra tantra



Sat-Chakram

(Seven-centred Cosmic Man) The Subtle Yogā Body is shown with the main "motility-pathways" *(Nadis)* and "energy-focii" *(Chakras)*. The invoked *(transformed)* concentrations are represented by the Deities *(Devata)*, and the Matrix-vibrations *(Bija)* by the Sanskrit-Nepalese manuscript, 17th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

CHAPTER III

The Tantric Concept of Sound

Primordial sound *(Shabd)* is the inner sound. It exists both as "unstruck" and "struck" . . . without vibration, and with vibration :

"In Tantric thought, sound without vibration does exist. This unstruck sound, or *anahata-dhvani,* is only heard by the Yogi whose senses are withdrawn from the external and turned inwards."

Ajit Mookerjee

" 'struck' sound is said to give pleasure . . .
'unstruck' sound leads to Liberation."

Narada Purana

Struck sound is called *Nada* :

"Born of the union of breath and fire,
Intelligible sound is called *Nada.*

Sangita makaranda

The concept of *Sphotavada* or *Shabda-Brahma* is the foundation of Tantric sound-theory and Tantric mantra-practice. This declares that everything (subtle and gross) originates in sound. According to ancient and authoritative Yoga sources, the whole universe is formed out of fifty distinct "Mother" vibrations, called *Matrika.* These *Matrika* were revealed, through Yoga, to the Rishis and Yogis of the remote past. Comprehending the nature of the speech-principle (*Shabda-Brahma*) as being cosmically inseparable from the *Brahman,* and realising the potentiality of the word-principle (*Vac-tattva*), they formulated a "language" of "manifest-matrika", which became known as Sanskrit. The Sanskrit alphabet of fifty "manifest-matrika" became, as it still is today, the medium of communication for the Vedantist, Rishi, Yogi

and Brahman. Pure Sanskrit (as sound distinct from meaning) is the base upon which *Shabd-Yoga* (Mantrayana), the essence of Tantra Yoga, is founded. Mantras are "sound-formulae" formed by carefully "stringing-together" selected Primordial vibrations (*Bija*) according to their natural and cosmological relationship. A *mantra*, properly prepared and correctly activated, has the effect of acting on the universe according to the inherent harmonious or inharmonious aggregate of its structure. Tantric teachings tell us of four kinds of sound :

(i) *Para* : Unmanifest sound.
(ii) *Pasyanti* : Unmanifest sound becoming manifest.
(iii) *Madhyama* : "Luminous" sound, enclosing space and becoming form.
(iv) *Vaikhari* : Enclosed sound. Manifests as form.

"The sound-before-sound, the *anahata-dhvani* which is not struck because there is no 'form against form' and which as *Shabda* reverberates upon itself, thereby produces sound-energy that evolves as a *rupa* (form) enveloped in pulsation. Sound is the reflex of form; and form is the product of sound."

Ajit Mookerjee

The theory of vibration (*Spanda*) relates directly to the concept of potential-sound (*shabda-tanmatra*) which develops into the individual *matrika* as the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. These letters are called *varnas*, meaning colours, as each of these distinct "matrix-vibrations" has a definite colour-affinity. As the gross aspect of the subtle *(Shabd)*, these "phenomenal seeds" are the foundation of the ever-changing Reality . . . and are inseparable from Consciousness.

Consciousness, subtle sound, manifest sound, form, colour and the elements are all inter-related.

Every *Matrika* has a *Shakti* (Energy).

Of all the *Shaktis*, the *Kundalini-Shakti* is the greatest. This "serpent-energy" of potential vibration, is the "atomic" energy of the microcosm. Contained within the body there is a great power-potential. It is the power of the Cosmos. "Coiled" in the lower centres, the *Kundalini-Shakti* may be released through "vibrational" activity. This vibrational activity can be of three kinds :

Through Breath-Control (*Pranayama*) : Breath-Activity.
Through Sound (*Mantra*) : Sound-Activity.
Through Elementals : Alchemical-Activity.

Associated in ancient times with the Mother-Goddess, and the Earth-Goddess, this energy has been worshipped as the One Principle by which the Nature-Potential may be released into the realm of Cosmic-Consciousness.

When activated, this energy surges through the subtle body and "discharges" as *Amrit* ("Nectar"), flooding the Consciousness with Blissfulness. This union of "moon" and "sun", once again brings us to the polarity-symbolism, which is the undercurrent of the Tantric cosmology. Dr. Wilhelm Reich, in his researches into "Orgone-Energy", undoubtedly stumbled upon the all-powerful Kundalini-Shakti, which has it's root in the sexual centres. According to the *Kularnava tantra,* the world "is made only of Shiva and Shakti". When separated, these two poles strive to unite. When united, Blissfulness is the result.

Moving up the central axis ("Mount-Meru") of the Subtle body [composed of *Pranas* (Vitality-essences) and *Nadis* (Vitality-essence-channels)] through the *Sushumna-Nadi* ("Central pathway"), also called *"Meru-danda"* (Mount Meru Staff), through the *Chakras* (Subtle-body centres) to "Immortal" Union with the *Shiva* Consciousness-principle of the *Sahasrara-Padma-Chakra* (at the top of the head), the *Kundalini-Shakti* "consummates" the "marriage" of Individual Spirit (*Atma*) to Universal Spirit (*Paramatma*). The release of this energy from the "earthy" to the "etheric", through the vortices of the subtle colour sound centres (*Chakras*) is a highly specialized science (The science of inner cosmic energy) which is known in the East as *Kundalini-, Laya-* or *Kriya-Yoga*. These specialised "branches" of *Tantra Yoga,* are chiefly concerned with *sound* and *breath.*

The *Prana-Maya-Kosha* (Subtle Consciousness of Vitality) is an "aggregate" of *Pranas* (Vitality-essences) which effect the physical (health) and mental (psychic) condition of every Being. The Pranas are the Vitalities of the Consciousness.

Within the aggregate of every person there are five *primary,* and five *secondary* pranas which permeate the whole, and which move along "Vitality-air-pathways" called *Vayu.* When the *Vayu* become "knotted", blocked or swollen, then certain parts of the body are "starved" of vitality, with the result that a sickness (mental or physical) develops. The five primary *prana-vayu* are given, together with their subtle cosmic colour relationship and their areas of concentration.

(i) *Prana* : "The Life-holder", the vibration of cohesion ... cosmic colour relation is *Emerald-Blue*. Associated with the planet Mercury. Element is Earth.

(ii) *Udana* : "The Upwards-Moving", the vibration of temperature ... cosmic colour is a *Reddish-Violet*. Associated with the planet Saturn. Element is Air.

(iii) *Apana* : "The Downwards-Moving", the vibration of movement ... cosmic colour is an *Orange-Red*. Associated with the planet Venus, and with the moon. Element is Water.

(iv) *Samana* : "The One-Like-Fire", the vibration of solidification ... cosmic colour is a *fire-like Red*. Associated with the planet Mars, and with the sun. Element is Fire.

(v) *Vyana* : "The Encompasser", the vibration of spaciousness ... cosmic colour is a *Blue-White*. Associated with the planet Jupiter. Element is Ether.

Prana concentrates around the Heart region, and is responsible for respiration. *Pranayama*, the science of breath, concentrates on the extraction of the Prana-vitality-essences from the inhaled air. It has sense-contact with the nose, and is associated with the sense of smell.

Udana concentrates around the throat region, and is responsible for the flow of liquids and secretions. It has sense-contact with the skin, and is associated with the sense of touch.

Apana concentrates around the genital region, and is responsible for the lower (gastro-intestinal and urinary) regions. It has sense-contact with the tongue, and is associated with the sense of taste. According to the theory of taste (*Rasa*) every element, herb or compound is to be classified according to one of the six primary tastes : Sweet, Sour, Saline, Pungent, Bitter or Astringent. Combinations of these primaries produce either an harmonious (healthy) or inharmonious (unhealthy) reaction in the *body-humors* (*Tridosha*) of *Vayu* (Space & Air aggregate), *Pitta* (Fire aggregate) and *Kaph* (Water and Earth aggregate). Thus through the *Apana-vayu* (taste-motility pathway) the threefold materiality-basis can be modified through the *Rasayana* (taste-science) prepara-

tions, which are the "elixers" and "rejuvenators" of Alchemical reference. According to the *Ayurveda* ("science of life") traditions, well-tested by the Doctor-Yogi-Alchemist of the ancient East, which system of medicine was the inspiration of Greek and Arab Medical Science, the three Cosmic-essentials of Sweet, Sour and Saline pacify the *Vayu* (Space/Air Aggregate). Sweet, Bitter and Astringent pacify the *Pitta* (Fire) aggregate and Pungent, Bitter and Astringent pacify the *Kaph* (Water/Earth aggregate). Many are the combinations and permutations of this Essential relationship.

Samana concentrates around the navel region, and is responsible for the digestion. It has sense-contact with the eyes, and is associated with the sight.

Vyana concentrates around the body, mainly around the head, is responsible for the bodily movements and postures (*Asana*). It has sense-contact with the ears and is associated with sound, the subtle form of which (*Shabd*) exists as "uncreate" energy.

Many are the "branches" of the Nadi "tree" :
Siddha Naropa has said :

"... each of the twenty-four parts of the organism has three branches, so that there are seventy-two lotus-seated ways. These again branch off until their total is 72,000 ..."

and continues :

"There are as many *very* subtle pathways as there are hairs on the body."

from : *the Life of Naro*

The three main *Nadis* (vitality-air-pathways) are called the *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Sushumna*. Reaching from the base of the spine (perineum) to the top of the head (fontanel) and then curving downwards to the brow (pituitary), the *Ida* (to the left) and the *Pingala* (to the right) cross the central *Sushumna* (the axis or "Mount Meru") at the subtle *Chakras* (centres). Though there are innumerable Chakras comprising the subtle body, we are chiefly concerned with the Primary ones. These are four in number, and are located along the axis of the central "pathway", and are variously described (for purposes of visualisation)

in the Tantras from Tibet, Nepal, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, Kashmir, China, Mongolia, Japan, Java, and South India. The medical literature of the East similarly describes (and medically relates to) these centres as being focii for the storing and transformation of the vitality of Life. Sufi teachings also refer to such subtle centres, calling them "Teacher" (Head); "Mysterious" (Throat), "Secret" (Heart) and "Self" (Navel). Many of the more popular treatises on the subtle body refer to seven primary centres (equating these with the musical notes and colours of the spectrum), adding "Base-centre" (*Muladhara*-chakra), "Abdomen-centre" (*Swadisthana*-chakra) and "Brow-centre" (*Ajna*-chakra) to the already-mentioned "Navel-centre" (*Manipura*-chakra), "Heart-centre" (*Anahata*-chakra), "Throat-centre" (*Vishuddha*-chakra) and "Head-centre" (*Sahasrara-padma*-chakra). This tradition is quite late, coming not before the 10th century, and it seems to be a corruption of a much earlier, and Yogically more correct, tradition of just four primary subtle centres, which have their equivalent (esoterically) with the four consecrations (Master, Secret, Knowledge and Fourth), four Pitths (Uddiyana, Kamakhya, Sirihatta and Purnagiri), four Joys, four Truths, four Moments, four Realities, four Mudras (Symbols), four classes etc.

Each of the *Chakras* (centres) are described as being "lotus-like" with "petals" of a specific number and colour, and with associated" "seed-sounds" (*Bija*), Forms (*Yantra*) and presiding "deity" (*Devata*). The "petals" branch off into the "pathways" (*Nadi*) "like spokes of an umbrella", through which the subtle "airs" (*Prana-vayu's* : Vitality-essences) can move throughout the whole psycho-organism. These develop and control the secretions *(Bindus)*, which in turn (by means of the endocrine-mechanism) govern the physical body.

"The Yogi should know the construction of the Vajra body, made of the six elements . . . its creation, existence, and decay. Specifically, he should know how the nadis, pranas and bindus function, and thoroughly understand the mind's nature."

Six Yogas of Naropa

The ancient tradition differs with the later "popular" tradition, as with the number of emanating "petals" of the centres. ~~The~~ three principle *Nadi* (*Nada* : sound-wave) are associated with Colour (Red : *Ida*, White : *Pingala*, Dark : *Sushumna*) and Matrix-sounds called

Ali (vowel-vibrations), 16 in number and connected with *Lalana* (*Ida*-nadi), and *Kali* (consonant-vibrations), 34 in number and connected with *Rasana* (*Pingala*-nadi) :

"Our speech is called uttering *(Japa)*, because it is the enunciation of *Ali* and *Kali*."

Hevajra tantra

The Yoga instructions on the visualisation and activation of the subtle body vary according to the tradition of the Guru, however there are a number of "common-factors" which are now given :

First there is the visualisation of the "Emptiness", and "Hollowness" of the body. Then a central axis ("Mount Meru") is imagined, reaching from the base of the spine to the crown of the head (the *Brahmarandhra* : "aperture of Brahma"), also hollow "reed-like" and of a dark blue-black colour (the colour of outer space). Then to each side of the central "staff" are a smaller channel (*Ida* & *Pingala*), each of which are also hollow. Tradition varies slightly as to the colours attributed to these two channels, but generally they are a mixture of Red and White, with a concentration of Red to the Right, and White to the Left. Likewise the breath is associated with these channels, the equalising of breath being the aim of Hatha-Yoga (as expounded by Matsyendra Nath and Patanjali) . . . the HA-breath (Right : "Sun") and the THA-breath (Left : "Moon") governing the flow of Blood (*Rakta*) and Semen (*Shukra*) and influencing the whole vitality of Being. The tradition can be "plotted" as follows :

Left side	*Centre*	*Right side*
THA-breath	HATHA (Yoga)	HA-breath
"Moon"	"Fire"	"Sun"
Female	Sahaja ("together")	Male
"Magnetic"	"Timeless"	"Electrical"
"Subject-polarity"	"Absolute"	"Object-polarity"
Lalana	Avadhuti	Rasana
Pingala-nadi (Skt.)	Sushumna-nadi (Skt.)	Ida-nadi (Skt.)
(Tib : rkyanma-tsa)	(Tib : uma-tsa)	(Tib : roma-tsa)
Ali (vowels) : 16	Bindu ("point")	Kali (consonants): 34
Semen (Shukra)	Bodhicitta (the "thought of enlightenment")	Blood (Rakta)
WHITE	BLUE-BLACK	RED

"The pathways are static, motility is dynamic, and Enlightenment is Creative."

Naropa

The central *Sushumna-Nadi* (*Avadhuti*, "Mount Meru") is described in great detail in many of the Tantras. It is composed of three very subtle layers . . .

(i) *Vajra-Nadi* : extending from the Navel centre to the top of the head. It is very subtle and regulates the flow of electrical energy within the body.

(ii) *Chitrini-Nadi* : situated within the Vajra-Nadi, this is described as being "like a spiders web", reaching from the base of the spine (perineum) to the top of the head, and carrying the cosmic energy through the central axis.

(iii) *Brahma-Nadi* : this is the most subtle of all the Nadi and is encased within the Chitrini. It is the "pathway" of the "unstruck" *Anahata-dhvani* "sound", of the inner Being-Consciousness.

Tantras equate these three most subtle Nadis in the following way :

Nadi		*"Hindu" Tantras*		*"Buddhist" Tantras (Vajrayana)*
Vajra	:	Sat (Truth)	:	Sunyata (Voidness)
Chitrini	:	Chit (Consciousness)	:	Vijnana (Consciousness)
Brahma	:	Ananda (Bliss)	:	Mahasukha (Blissfulness)

The Doha-songs of the Siddha Saraha, beautifully describe the structure of the subtle body, in this easy-to-interpret *Sandhyabhasa* form :

"Here is the sacred Jumna, and here the river Ganges,
Here are Prayaga and Benares, here are Sun and Moon.
Here I have visited in my wanderings, shrines and such places of pilgrimage,
For I have not seen another shrine as Blissful as my own body . . ."

and Siddha Naropa adds :

"By observing day and night the patterns of concretization, non-concretization, and utter non-concretization, like fire melting ice, one disentangles the pathways and straightens them out in the central pathway; action-motility is totally stopped and the instinctive forces become transcending awareness. The "Red" and the "White" materiality producing forces become the unitary creative potentiality. Physically the organism becomes a transfigured body, and mentally-spiritually radiant light, bliss and nothingness."

and :

"*Ananda* is the form of *Brahman,* and that *Ananda* (Bliss) is installed in the body."

Kularnava tantra

The Buddhist "Theory of the Universe" describes how this world is but one of a series, which forms a total universe, of which there are many. It describes how each universe is surrounded on all sides by endless space, which "weaves" a "fabric" of "Dark-Blue-Subtlety", hard and imperishable "like diamonds". Upon this is set the "body of waters", which has a foundation of purest gold. Upon this rests the earth, which consists of a "great mountain" . . . Mount Meru . . . which is 84,000 miles high, and which leads to the "heavens". Within the "body of waters" surrounding the mountain, are the four great continents, each with bases of purest gold in the form of a tortoise.

The contents of this "fabulous" mythology . . . which goes on to describe the seven rings of intermediate mountains, the seven oceans of milk, curds, butter, blood, wine, fresh water & salt water, the sun chariot of "glazed fire", the moon chariot of "glazed water", the inhabitants of the four continents, of triangular, round, square and crescent shape . . . have great "esoteric" meaning, as can be understood by the structure of the subtle body of man. Mount Meru, is the axis (*Avadhuti*), the four continents the four centres (*Chakras*) with their Elemental relationships. The seven oceans, the 84,000 miles and the "purest gold" all have their equivalents within the subtle body. This is true Tantric esoterism.

The *Chakras* (Subtle-centres) are the "extractors" and "distributors"

of the *Pranas* (Vitalities). The ancient Tantric-Yoga tradition gives the four Primary ("*Pitths*" : "Seats") centres as :

(i) Head : *Sahasrara-Padma-Chakra* : Has 32 "petals" *(Nadi)* which are turned downwards. The Cosmic Colour is *White,* the Form "flame-like", Element is the "Space" ("Ether") and *Bija*-sound is *Ham.*
It represents the aggregate of Cohesion.

(ii) Throat : *Vishuddha-Chakra* : Has 16 "petals" *(Nadi)* which are all turned upwards. The Cosmic Colour is *Red,* the Form is "interlaced", Element is the "Air" and Bija-sound is *Om.*
It represents the aggregate of Temperature.

(iii) Heart : *Anahata Chakra* : Has 8 "petals" *(Nadi)* which are all turned downwards. The Cosmic Colour is *Dark* (Black), Form is "Star-like", The *Bija-mantra* (sound) is *Hum.*
It represents the aggregate of Cosmic Movement.

(iv) Navel : *Manipura Chakra* : A "lotus" of 64 "petals", all of which are turned upwards. The Cosmic Colour is *Yellow*, Form is "Square" and Element is "Fire". The *Bija*-sound is *Ah.*
It represents the aggregate of Solidification.

Thus the *Bijas* are :

Ham	:	Head
Om	:	Throat
Hum	:	Heart
Ah	:	Navel

This is the "cycle of activation" of the most ancient method of the Tantric Kundalini-Yoga, as practised by Matsyendra Nath, Gorakh Nath, Padmasambhava, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa and others. The "base" is the Navel centre . . . a "lotus" of 64 "petals" with a central "core" through which the transformed energies flow. It is the *Transformation Centre* :

"Candali blazes at the Navel,
Ham is burnt and the Moon melts."

Hevajra tantra

This is the "cycle" of the Alchemist-Yogi, concerned as he is with the transformation and transmutation of the inner Being.

The Kundalini-Shakti, which manifests as a "Fire-serpent" is the Cosmic-Energy which, rising up from the Navel Centre, reaches the Head centre whereupon "resides" the Cosmic-Consciousness ("Shiva"). The "contact" of "Shiva" with the "Shakti" releases a great feeling of Blissfulness, accompanied by actual physical changes in the body. These changes commence within the endocrine system, through the Pituitary and Pineal glands. The "secretion of Blissfulness", the "Divine Sperm", produced from the contact of the two forces, permeates the whole being, flooding all the centres of the body with Bliss-Reality. This Infinite Blissfulness is termed *Mahasukha* and this is the "Doctrine" of all the highest developed Yogis. Along with this doctrine is the concept of *Sahaja* ("togetherness"), with the symbolism of the Union of Cosmic Male with Cosmic Female being the main basis of all practice. The "essence" coming from this "togetherness" is the *Soma-rasa,* the "Elixer" (*Amrit*), so well known to Vedic mythology. This very Elixer is contained within our body, if we but understand how to release it by means of an inner transformation. This is the "Purest Gold" of the Buddhist Cosmology. It is within each one of us.

The Inner Fire, developed in the "Transformation Centre" of the Navel 64-petalled Chakra, is the subject of many Tibetan and Indian studies. This has, however, become little more than a philosophical concept, and hardly practised, owing to the fact that the real essence has rarely been understood, let alone experienced. The cultivation of the inner fire (by means of breath-control : i.e. extracting the Vitality from the air and storing it in the Navel centre, to be released as Blissfulness) and the resultant Occult powers (*Siddhi*), is the total alchemical-reintegration of the whole being of the Yogi. The "64-Yogini Pitths" were built as initiatory *Mandalas* . . . mandalas (*Chakras*) of the truth of the Navel Centre as repository of the Vitality-forces.

"The Yogi may think of the Tumo-fire spreading into all the Nadis . . . throughout the entire body. Thus the whole body becomes a "blazing fireball."

G. C. Chang

"If the pure essence of the *Pranas* can be gathered in the *Chakras*, then Buddha-lands will appear."

Naropa

Though the "popular" traditions vary concerning the number, colour, *Bijas* etc. of the *Chakras,* not to mention their special "attributes", it is remarkable that this actual practical system of understanding still survives, and which relates absolutely to the medical and astrological theories of the ancient East. Undoubtedly this Cosmic Truth underwent many changes in the process of becoming "Known". Luckily the Truth still survives. Thus Sri Aurobindo (a "Hindu" Tantric) beautifully tells :

"A mighty movement rocked the inner space,
As if a world were shaken and found its soul
Out of the Inconscient's soulless mindless night;
A Flaming Serpent rose, released from sleep . . .
It rose billowing its coils and stood erect
And climbing mightily stormily on its way
It touched Her centres with its flaming mouth :
As if a fiery kiss had broken their sleep,
They Bloomed and Laughed, surcharged with Light and Bliss."

Most of the "later" (and even "popular") Tantras refer to seven Chakras, with the *Kundalini-energy* normally dormant in the *Kula* of the genital regions. These descriptions generally add two lower Chakras (*Swaddisthana Chakra* : Abdomen, and *Muladhara Chakra* : Genital region), as well as one extra "higher" centre (*Ajna-Chakra* : Eyebrows), to the traditional four already mentioned and described. Though these other centres do undoubtedly have some reality, they are not the components of the Primary *Subtle Body of Transformation,* and as such have little to do with Kundalini-Yoga. The two "lower" Chakras relate to the Elements Water and Earth, which are both very material things. The *Ajna-Chakra* is the junction of the left and right vitality "pathways" relating to breath, and has little relationship to transformation, since the transformation is completed through the Head centre, and then pervades downwards. This centre (*Ajna*) is used, however, in certain Yoga techniques, and is a definite centre of concentration.

The popular tradition of the seven centres generally describe a most poetic and intricate system of centres and channels, but though this is, at times, partially correct, it very rarely relates to the sciences of Medicine

or Astrology, and in fact is only a subtle body of *Meditation* with no physiological reality.

As for the *Kundalini*-energy, it does most certainly exist in the lower regions of the body, but only in coarse form. The real Kundalini-*fire* does not develop without the extracted *Pranic* energies activating it at the Navel centre. So it is that the most ancient Yoga techniques tell how the five primary Pranas may be "juggled" so as to activate the Kundalini, which is then really Transformed from the Coarse (Physical) to the Subtle (Etheric), and which, in union with the consciousness-principle, produces the Bliss.

"One who knows the Prana . . . from where it comes, how it enters the body, how it lives there after dividing fivefold, and what are its inner workings . . . such a one attains immortality."

Prasna Upanishad

According to the Tantra Yoga concept of vibration (*Spanda*) there is a constant "sound" (vibration) produced by the normal breathing being. This sound manifests as repetition (*Japa*), which, in the "ordinary man" produces a rythm of 21,600 "cycles" in the course of one full day and night. This is reckoned to be one "Unit" . . . and is the "unit" (vibratory rate) of the central "pathway" (Mt. Meru). By dividing day and night into equal parts a rate of 10,800 is found . . . this being the "vibration" of the right and left *(Rasana & Lalana)* Nadis. By dividing this into four units of 360 minutes each we find the rate of the focal point of sexuality . . . which is 5,400. The "Heart" rate is 2,700, determined by dividing into eight units of 180 minutes each. Dividing into 16 units of 90 minutes each we reach the rate of 1,350 . . . the vibration of the throat region. Similarly the "Head" rate is 675 (32 units of 45 minutes), and the "Navel" rate is $337\frac{1}{2}$ (64 units of $22\frac{1}{2}$ minutes each).

courtesy : *Naropa* & *Guenther*

By means of conscious breath-control *(Pranayama)* and "Vibrational-activity" *(Mantrayana)*, it is possible to influence these rates, influence the subtle and physical body, and even influence the phenomenal macrocosm. This is the essence of Tantra Yoga.

A *Mantra* is a mental sound . . . an "instrument" or "protection of mind", an audible or inaudible (subtle) structure created or received . . . and always used for a specific and exact purpose. A *Mantra*, when activated (*Japa* : Repetition) gives rise to a very distinct vibration. This vibration, from "unstruck" to "struck" interacts on the Elemental world in accordance with the fundamental characteristics of phenomena. Mantras can be "inner" or "outer" :

"*Japa* (Repetition of Mantra) is of three kinds. Japa done aloud is the lowest; Japa done in low tones is the middle; Japa done mentally is the best."

Kularnava tantra

Mantras are generally received directly from the Master (*Guru*), but are sometimes revealed in trance, vision, telepathically, in dream state, or through *Samadhi* (Enlightened state). They are used most of all in conjunction with breathing disciplines . . . the two "vibrational-activities" together bringing about the required transmutation. Mantras are "formed" out of *Bija-Matrika* (*Bija* : Seed, *Matrika* : Mother), and are "married together" according to their natural relationship (Cosmological order). *Japa* (Repetition) is the rythmical concentration of the *Mantra*. The governing factors of *Mantrayana* are :

(i) That there should be a firm philosophical basis.
(ii) That the Mantra should be truly "received" or "selected" with full knowledge of its mechanism and componants (*Bija*).
(iii) That the sound-value should be exact.
(iv) That the repetition (*Japa*) should be both relaxed and rythmical.
(v) That the concentration should be Absolute (no real distraction).
(vi) That the purpose of activation, and the rate of concentration (*Japa*) should be perfectly clear.

Immediately related to *Mantrayana* is the science of *Yantra*. A *Yantra* is a *form*, just as a Mantra is *sound*. Yantras and Mantras are directly related :

"Mantra gives formula and equation.
Yantra gives diagram and pattern."

Ajit Mookerjee

Just as a musical note has a distinct pattern, so every Mantra has a distinct form (*Yantra*).

"The Yantra is ensouled by the Mantra, and Deity is the form of the Mantra."

Kularnava tantra

"As the body is to the Jiva, as oil is to the lamp, so is Yantra the established seat of all the Deities."

Kularnava tantra

A Yantra is both the form of a sound, and a point of contact with the Source of the sound. The process of drawing a Yantra is called *Rekha*. This is a "magical" act, an act made with "one-pointedness" and intensity. As the *Rekha* (movement-structure) of the Yantra is made an "invocation" takes place, and energies are released. The making of a Yantra must always be a Conscious process.

Breath-movement (*Pranayama*) is closely related to inner sound (*Shabd*), the Subtle body, to *Mantra, Yantra* and to *Asana* (Body posture). A body has *Yantra* (Form) by the nature of it's posture (*Asana*). It has *Mantra* by the nature of its breathing (*Pranayam*) :

"Breath is the abode of Primal Energy, and Space (Ether) is its support."

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

"When Consciousness rules breath, with inbreath we can smell all perfumes . . ."

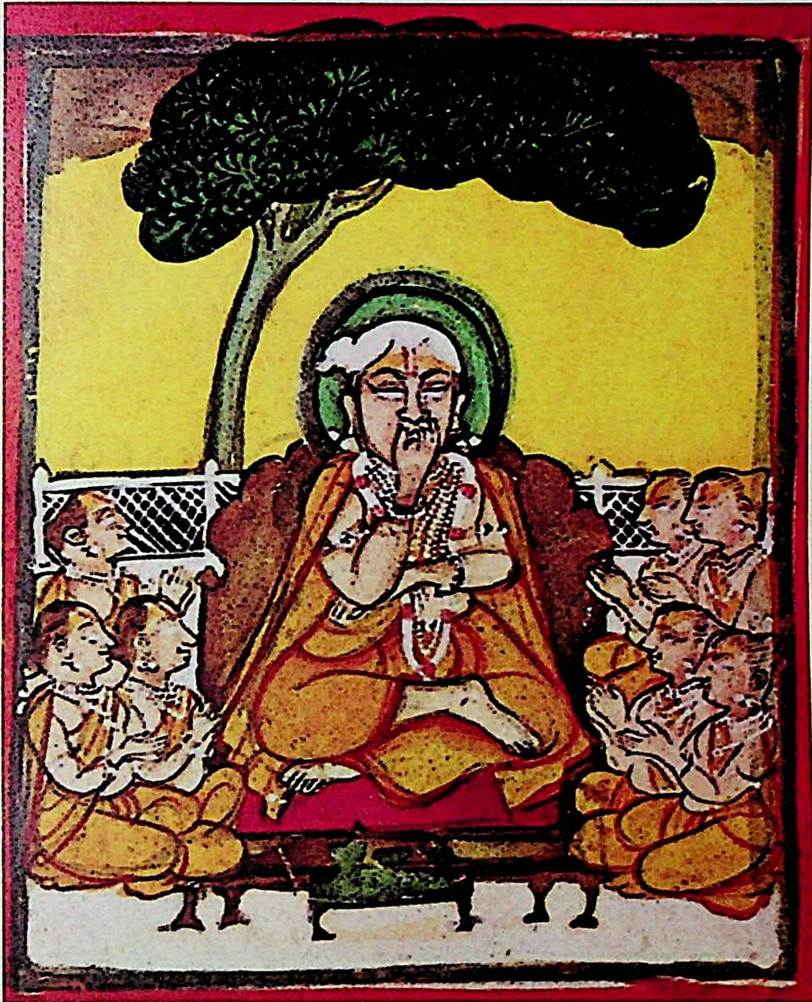
Kaushitaki Upanishad

"The flow of air in the gross body is linked with a corresponding current of Prana (psychic energy) in the subtle (astral) body. The two function more or less in parallel, and can mutually influence each other."

Omar Garrison

"Becoming the Fire, which dwells in the bodies of all living beings, and uniting with the *Prana* and the *Apana,* I digest the four kinds of food."

Gita



Pranayama

A Master instructs pupils in Yoga breathing *(Pranayama)*. Here he shows the "Alternate—nostril *Pranayama*" (Breathing through each nostril separately, in turn) by means of which the HA-breath ("Sun" breath : right nostril) and THA-breath ("Moon" breath : left nostril) may be equalised.
His hand is held in *Mudra* (Gesture) to regulate the flow of air.
Painting from Rajasthan, 18th century, (Private Collection).

"*Candali* blazes up at the navel.
She burns the Five Buddhas.
She burns *Locana* and the others.
Ham is burnt and the Moon melts."

Hevajra tantra



The Very Subtle

A "view" of the most subtle regions "Where only Gods reside", penetrated by the Kundalini *(Candali)*—fire beyond the topmost Chakra. Nepali manuscript, 17th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

"All the worlds from Brahma-loka downwards, are subject to appearance and disappearance."

Gita



Sat-Chakram ("Seven-centered Cosmic Man")
The Subtle-body (Yoga-body) is beautifully shown from "Root" to "Apex", with the three primary *Nadi*, the *Bija* sounds, the *Yantra* forms, the names of the *Devata* (Deities) written alongside, and the "footprints of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*" (White and Red) in the "Thousand-petalled lotus". Nepalese painting, 17th century: (Private Collection).

"There are Moon and Sun, and between them is the Seed. This last is that Being, whose nature is Joy Supreme."

Hevajra tantra



Kundalini (Latent: as coiled "Serpent-energy"). Painting Gujarat, 17th century.: (Private collection)



Kundalini (Manifest: as "Candali" or "Kundalini-Devi"). Nepalese manuscript, 18th century: (Private collection).

"Know that whatsoever being is born, has emanated from the union of Matter and Spirit."

Gita



Contemporary image
Vakreshwar Pitth, Bengal.

"Concentrate upon the triangle of Origination in the midst of space, and then perform this meditation at its centre : First the figurative representations of the four elements in their right order . . . in the due order of appearance of the Divinities. First Earth and Water, then Fire and Air, which correspond with the appearance of the Goddesses, and with the meditator himself."

Hevajra tantra



The Triangle of Origination

Yantra (copper) from Himalaya region, *Circa* 17th century. (Private collection).

"The *Mandala* which now arises pure and unblemished from the triangle, consists of two concentric parts, one formed by the eight central petals of the lotus, and the other by the triangle. At their centre one should imagine a corpse, which is the seat of the Yoginis. Resting upon the corpse there should be a lunar disk, upon that the seed-syllable, and upon that a solar disk. The conjunction of Lunar disk and Solar disk, is the Great Bliss.

Hevajra tantra



Eight-fold Yantra of the Heart
Nepalese manuscript, 17th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

"Then in offering up the circle of offerings,
Imagine the spinal column of the body to be Mount Meru,
The four chief limbs to be the four continents,
The minor limbs to be the subcontinents,
The head to be the worlds of the Devas,
The two eyes to be sun and moon."

Chod mss



"Let the *Sadhaka* meditate upon an eight-petalled lotus, placed upon an altar amidst a forest; Let him meditate upon the *Yoni* of the lotus, and upon the *Devi* Herself."

Triputastotram

Devi Yantra

Sri Yantra

"The merging of the Taught into the Untaught Has been called the Attaining of the Fruit."

Tibetan text



Matrika-Shakti
(Cosmic Mother-Goddess)
Seated on a full lotus in *Padmasana* (lotus-posture), full of promise, she holds the conch *(Sankha)* and rosary *(Mala)*. Only through *Sadhana* will she reveal herself.
Jageshwar, Kumaon Himalaya, *Circa* 18th century. Stone.

Sadhana : The Practice of Tantra Yoga

Sadhana is the practice of Tantra Yoga, which distinguishes it from other forms of Yoga. Sadhana is the "inner-unfoldment" of the *Sadhaka* (Practicer) by means of a "formula of worship" by which the macrocosm and Microcosm may be "woven" into a "fabric" of Reality. Yoga (Union) is brought about through three stages : First is the Foundation, then the Method, and finally the inner Realisation. All Tantric Sadhana presupposes a thorough practical knowledge of Hatha-Yoga (Postures and Breath-control) :

"The most important equipment necessary for the Neophyte is that he should be proficient in the art of Hatha-Yoga, without which it is not possible to proceed with any Sadhana worth the name."

B. Bhattacharya

"All Tantrism presupposes mastery of the intricate Hatha-Yoga training."

M. Eliade

The Foundation (Basis) of Tantric Practice *(Sadhana)* is made up of the following :

(i) The *Disciplines*
(*Yama* & *Niyama*)

"Harmlessness, Truth, Honesty, Chastity, Non-Greed . . . these are Yama."

Patanjali

For the Tantric Sadhaka, Yama generally means that only "Sattvic" foods should be taken. No Meat, Fish, Eggs, Onions, Strong spices or oils.

"Purity, Contentment, Austerity, Study, Earnest Desire are Niyama."

Patanjali

(ii) *Posture*
(*Asana*)

"Firm, Pleasant . . . that is Asana."

Patanjali

The practice of Hatha-Yoga Asanas for the development of a stable and healthy body, is most important. The body is the "laboratory" for the Sadhana, and for the actual experience of the Tantra. It must be "firm" and "in tune" in order to contain and maintain the ecstatic experience. *Asana* (Posture) is the *Yantra* (Form) of the body. The subtle *Vyana-prana,* associated with the element Ether, is directly connected with the *Yantra* of the body (i.e. its posture). Thus, in order to control the *Vyana*, posture must also be controlled. Inner sound (*Shabd*) and posture (*Asana*) are inter-dependent. All Sadhanas make use of *Asana,* it being the "base", free from strain and cosmically in tune, for the process of inner awakening. Advanced Sadhanas, of the Yoga tantra class, use *Asana* (Posture) as the governing factor when Yogi and Yogini are in union together. In this context it means the exact positions *(Asana)* of embrace, touch and contact when in physical union together.

(iii) *Breath Control*
(*Pranayama*)

Control of the subtle body through *Pranayama* is the equivalent of control of the physical body by means of Hatha-Yoga Asanas. Breath is the "vibration" (Rhythm) of the vitality. Correct breathing is used as an aid to concentration (through the action of breath on the subtle, and is inseperable

from *Mantrayana* (vibration-activity). Breathing involves three distinct processes ... Inbreathing (*Puraka*), Retention (*Kumbhaka*) and Exhalation (*Rechaka*). The "relative frequency" of these three activities, determines the extraction and flow of vitality. Breath is life.

(iv) *Initiation* (*Diksa, Abhiseka*) This is the essential to every Sadhana. Initiation is the "gathering of spirituality" from one or many *Gurus* (Teachers). Generally a *Mantra* is given, together with an explanation of its activity and meaning, according to the degree of development (*Adhikara-bheda*) of the pupil. A Mantra of initiation is an exact formula. The Guru may initiate the neophyte into the inner "mystic circle" (*Chakra, Mandala*) in the more advanced *Yoga* and *Anuttarayoga* (Yogi or Yogini) tantra rites. Initiation puts the initiate into direct contact with the "essence-spirituality" of the Guru, and with the Gurus of that particular "line".

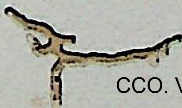
These four parts form the foundation of Tantric Sadhana. The method makes use of these as instruments by means of which the Realisation may be attained. The goal of Sadhana is *Samadhi*. The secondary products are the *Siddhi* (fabulous powers).

Sadhanas generally make use of the following :

(i) *Asana* : Posture. Important for the easy circulation of energies, and for physical comfort. *Asana* also gives psychic protection.

(ii) *Pranayama* : Breath Control. Used as an aid to concentration and to direct the flow of vital energy through the body. The *Kundalini-Shakti*, of enormous potential, is controlled through the practice of *Pranayama*.

(iii) *Pratyahara* : Sense-withdrawal. This is the Yoga technique



of withdrawing the contact of the senses with the external. This produces a "loosening" of the "bonds" of the Tattvas.

(iv) *Mantrayana* : Repetition (*Japa*) of inner "matrix" sounds (*Mantra*). Used as an aid to "one-pointedness" and in the activation of the *Chakras*, through which the *Kundalini-Shakti* will flow. Mantras are used in conjunction with breathing disciplines . . . throughout the Sadhanas.

(v) *Yantras* : Form-structures. The visualisation and exteriorisation of Form with regard to its subtle relationship to Sound (as *Mantra*) and invoked energy (*Devata*).

(vi) *Mandalas* : The "mystic circles" of initiation. A Mandala can be the "laying-out of the plan" of a particular Sadhana, and "insulating" it within a circle. Invocation releases forces which are contained in this way. Likewise the *Sadhaka* (practicer) must be protected against outside influences by this means. A Mandala can contain the whole essence of a Sadhana.

(vii) *Mudra* : Gesture. The "Yoga-seal". Generally meaning the exact interweaving of the fingers, or ritual gesture, as an aid to concentration and symbolically important as a mnemonic process. *Mudra* and *Asana* are closely related. This term (*Mudra*) is also used to refer to the female partner (*Yogini*) in certain Sadhanas.

(viii) *Dhyana* : Visualisation of the invoked deity (*Devata*), and meditation as this as the self.

(ix) *Sandhya* : Meditation on the subtle body (*nadi* & *chakra*) and on the release of the *Kundalini-shakti*.

(x) *Tarpana* : Purification of the elements. A Cosmological-Alchemic process aimed at recovering the Primary Elements in Original form, by means of purification. Symbolically very important during the practice of Sadhana.



(xi) *Nyasa* : Identification. This is physical identification of *Bija-Mantras* with parts of the body ... activated by touch ... Subtle identification with the Subtle body (the *Chakras*), or "imagined" identification with the invoked Energy (*Devata*).

(xii) *Shuddhi* : The "ingredients" of the Sadhana. The *Pancha-Makaras* ("Five M's") of the Hindu tradition ... *Madhya* ("wine"), *Matsya* ("fish"), *Mamsa* ("Meat"), *Mudra* ("Grain") and *Maithuna* ("Sexual Union"). The Buddhist tradition refers to these as *Pancha-Tattva* ("Five Essences")

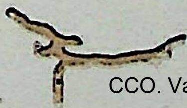
Sadhana is a "ritualistic" awakening, making use of all the essences *(Tattvas)* of the Being. Basic elements and tendencies are activated and mixed according to the requirement of prevailing conditions. Sadhana is the Tantric "weaving".

Samadhi is Absolute Realisation, brought about through *Sadhana*. This is the merging of the mind of the worshipper (*Sadhaka*) with the Infinite mind. This is the Bliss of Enlightenment.

Tantric Sadhanas are generally referred to as being one of two types ... either "Right-handed" (*Daksina*) or "Left-handed" (*Vama*). Generally "Right-handed" means that the "ingredients" (*Panch-Makaras*) are not actually used in the Sadhana. "Left-handed" Tantras advocate the actual partaking of Wine, Fish, Meat, Grain ("Woman") and Sexual Union ... such items normally forbidden to the Yogi. The Left-handed path is considered the more dangerous, and is generally practiced only by the more advanced *Anuttarayoga*, *Vamacharya*, *Siddhantacharya* or *Kaula* initiate. Left-handed rites are practiced either at midnight, or at any time. Right-handed rites have specific times for practice.

"If these five M's are materially used, and the relevant instructions are being taken literally, then Hindus call this *Vamacarya* or "left-handed" practice; if they are taken in some metaphorical, indirect sense then they refer to it as *Daksinacarya* or "right-handed" practice."

Agehananda Bharati



The female partner (*Yogini, Shakti*) for a particular Sadhana is either called *Bhogya-Shakti* (meaning "to be enjoyed") or *Pujya-Shakti* (meaning "to be worshipped"). The Bhogya-Shakti sits on the left of the Yogi, and sexual union takes place. The Pujya-Shakti sits on the right, and no sexual union is practiced. The best Shakti is considered to be the wife of the Sadhaka (*Sviya-Shakti*). Other Shaktis are "Anothers wife" (*Parakiya*) and "a Commoner" (*Sadharani*). If there is no marriage already, then Yogi and Yogini will be married for the period of the Sadhana.

Sadhanas are of many kinds. Some may be practiced alone, the "partner" being the *Kundalini-Shakti,* who is visualised in union with *Shiva* in the Sahasrara-Chakra. The *Asanas* (Postures) used in Sadhana can be of three kinds :

(i)	Asanas of normal practice. Seats of comfort for the long process of Sadhana.	e.g.	*Padmasana* : the "lotus" posture. Also called *Vajrasana.*
(ii)	Asanas using external objects to overcome fears, develop concentration or "potentialise" the being.	e.g.	*Sabasana* : seated on a corpse. *Chitasana* : seated on a funeral pyre. *Mundasana* : seated on five animal skulls.
(iii)	Asanas of sexual union. These postures are exactly prescribed for ecstatic love-making (Union). They produce a balanced flow of energy between the bodies in embrace.	e.g.	*Lata-asana* : Man and women "entwined like a creeper".

The *Dhyana* (Meditation) during the Sadhana is the central characteristic of each Sadhana. The meditation of the self as "God" in union with "Goddess" . . . Yogi in union with Yogini . . . according to the ancient formulae of sound, colour, form, direction and attributes, is the "trigger" that fires the Tantric "bullet" into Cosmic union. The Meditations have their basis in the *Tattvas* (essences). These are represented symbolically as the five "families" (*Vajra, Tathagata, Padma, Ratna* & *Karma*), the five elements (Ether, Air, Fire, Water &

Earth), the five *Dhyani-Buddhas* (*Vairocana, Amoghasiddhi, Amitabha, Aksobhya* and *Ratnasambhava*), the five Bijas (*Om, Ah, Hrih, Hum* & *Tram*), the five senses (Hearing, Seeing, Tasting, Touching & Smelling), the five colours (Blue, Green, Red, White & Yellow), the five wisdoms, the five gestures (*Mudra*), the five vehicles (*Vahana*) etc. . . . From these essences all the *Mandalas* (Mystic circles), Gods, Goddesses, Guardians, Genii etc. are derived. Likewise the ten *Mahavidyas* of the Hindu tradition find their origin in this Elemental relationship. This is, in fact, the mechanism of Tantra.

According to the *Guhyasamaja tantra,* one of the earliest Tantric works :

"When the Thought of Enlightenment merges with the Infinite Spirit in highest meditation, the Mind-sky is filled with visions and scenes until the *Bija* seed-syllables appear, gradually assuming the shape of deities . . . all these embodiments of the Infinite. These deities appear in the Mind-eye as being distinct, wearing particular and glorious clothes of specific colours and form, and emitting *Bija*-sounds. Some are peaceful and some are wrathful."

and

"From the right perception of Voidness proceeds the seed-syllable; from the seed-syllable the conception of an icon, and from the icon its external representation. The whole process is one of dependent origination."

Advayavajrasamgraha

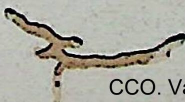
Sadhana can either be practiced alone, with a partner or in a circle (*Chakra*). When performed in a circle (generally of four, five, seven, nine, twelve, sixteen or thirty two couples) the Guru (or most senior *Sadhaka*) and his Shakti remain in the middle and are "worshipped" as the individual Gurus of each of the members of the circle. Those that are not already married will be married according to the tradition :

"Saiva marriage celebrated in the Chakra is of two kinds. One kind is terminated with the Chakra and the other is lifelong."

Mahanirvana Tantra

"The ritual proper coincides with the formation of the Chakra, the circle of male and female Sadhakas, or in Tantric phraseology, of the Shivas with their Shaktis. It is a genuine circle, for the participants sit in a circle, each Sadhaka has his Shakti on his right side in the case of right-handed Tantric ritual, and on his left in the case of the ritual we are presently describing . . . which, I hasten to repeat, is the core of Tantric ritual in general."

Agehananda Bharati



The Sadhana begins with both partners bathing, all the time thinking of the cosmic purpose of the Sadhana. The Shakti is anointed with perfume (generally of musk, patchouli or sandal) and is garlanded with flowers. Incense and lamps (candles) are lit and the Guru is "worshipped" with offerings of flowers, lamps, incense etc. The couple will repeat the Mantra of initiation and generally the Mantra of the "Deity" (*Devata*) to be invoked. If the Shakti has not been previously initiated she will be initiated with the Mantra *Hrim*, whispered into the ear. This will be followed by meditation on the four Tantric "seats" (*Pitths*), both as the directions, and as the four main Chakras of the Subtle body. This is the *Sandhya*.

The next stage is *Tarpana*, or "purification of the Elements". This will take place generally in front of a fire, accompanied by *Pranayama* (Breath-movement), *Mudra* (ritual gestures) and the *Bija-Mantras* (internally repeated) of the elements to be purified. The seat will then be purified and the couple will sit in *Asana*, side by side. The *Asana* used at this stage is generally *Padmasana* ("Vajrasana"), *Virasana* ("half-lotus") or a similar comfortable position.

The ritual-proper commences with the installation of the *Patras* (the bowls used to hold the ingredients). These are of specific form and material (copper, silver, gold), according to the tradition of the Sadhana, and are placed upon "bases" of *Yantras* which are "drawn" (*Rekha*) accompanied by *Mantras*, *Mudra* and *Pranayama*. The ritual here varies greatly from Sadhana to Sadhana, according to the type and purpose of the practice . . .

"The worshipper should then, in the space between himself and the Yantra, draw a triangle with the Bija *Hrim* in its centre, and outside the triangle in the order here stated, a circle, a hexagon and a square. The excellent disciple should then worship in the four corners of the square the four *Pitths*, with the Mantras formed of their respective names . . ."

"Then the six parts of the body should be worshipped in the six corners of the hexagon. Then worship the *Devata* of the triangle with the Mantra *Hrim* and *Namah*. Wash the receptacle with the Mantra *Namah*, and place it on the *Mandala*, and worship it in the ten *Kalas* . . ."

"Then, taking the vessel (*Patra*) of offering and purifying it with the Mantra *Phat*, place it on the tripod . . ."[n]

Mahanirvana tantra

Hemp (*Vijaya*) is generally taken just prior to the installation of the vessels. It is taken either as a drink, a sweet or sometimes smoked. The body organs are purified by Mantra, and the *Kundalini-Shakti* is visualised "ready to rise" from the lower regions. The ingredients (*Shuddhi*) . . . Meat, Fish, Grain, Wine . . . or their substitutes (Ginger, Lemon, Rice, Bhang), are placed in the bowls, accompanied by Meditation of their true meaning, Mantras of purification, and gestures of propitiation (*Mudra*) . . .

"Meat, fish, parched food, fruits, roots, or anything else offered to the *Devata* along with wine, are called *Shuddhi*."

Mahanirvana tantra

"Bring into this great cup, which is full of wine, the essence of ambrosia produced from the essence of all that is in this world with its differing kinds of taste. I offer as oblation into the Fire of the Supreme Self the excellent nectar of Thisness with which the cup of I-ness is filled."

Mahanirvana tantra

"We eat meat and drink wine. The true followers come all together, but the frauds are kept far away by fear. We take that fourfold preparation and musk and camphor. Herbs and special meat we eat with relish."

Hevajra tantra

Meditating on the wine as ambrosia (*Amrit*) and the food (usually a very small quantity in one bowl) as representing offerings to the Deity (*Devata*) . . . offerings of the animal (Meat), aquatic (Fish), and vegetable (Grain) worlds [and representing the *Tattva*-essence of evolved Spirit (*Jiva*)] . . . the *Sadhaka* and *Shakti* will take the bowl of wine in one hand, and some *Shuddhi* (food-offering) in the other, and will together first offer it to the "invoked" Deity (*Kundalini*) by bringing the two bowls together up from the base (*Mandala,* Platform, Seat) to the head (*Sahasrara-Chakra*), accompanied by visualisation of the *Kundalini-Devi* (*Kundalini-Shakti* as Goddess) rising up through the Centres (each one visualised with the *Bija-Mantras* mentally repeated) to union in the Etheric of the head . . .

"Then let them take up each his own cup and meditate on the *Kula-Kundalini*, who is Divine Consciousness, and who is spread from the *Muladhara*-lotus to the tip of the tongue, and, uttering the *Mula-Mantra,* let each, after taking the others' permission, offer it as oblation to the mouth of the *Kundali.*"

Mahanirvana tantra

"From the *Muladhara* go up to the *Brahmarandhra* again and again; Bliss issues out of this meeting of the *Kundalini-Shakti* and the Moon of full Consciousness. What flows from this lotus in the supreme Ether is the wine, the real wine to be tasted by man; what is drunk otherwise, is only liquor."

Kularnava tantra

"The yogin who delights in the drink of Yoga, becomes drunk with no other drink."

Hevajra tantra

The wine and other ingredients are then taken by the *Sadhaka* and the *Shakti,* until . . .

". . . the sight or the mind is not affected."

Mahanirvana tantra

The hands are then washed, and the final Tattva (*Maithuna* : Union) is proceeded with.

The Shakti is wrapped in a red robe (of silk or wool) and anointed. Water is sprinkled over her (sometimes wine) and incense may be lit. Then the Sadhaka touches (*Nyasa*) her forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, lobes of the ear, hollow of the throat, breasts, arms, hands, navel, thighs, yoni, knees and feet with the right hand whilst pronouncing the *Matrikas* (letters of the Sanskrit alphabet) and also the *Bija-Mantra* of the Deity (*Devata*). She must be seen "as the Goddess incarnate".

Then, in seated posture, the *Shakti* will be taken by the *Sadhaka* . . . *Linga* and *Yoni*, *Vajra* and *Padma*, *Shiva* and *Shakti* will become one. The Unity *(Samarasa)* is the essence of the Sadhana. It is the True Yoga . . . Union.

"Twofold is the Innate, for Wisdom is the Woman, and Means is the Man . . ."

"Neither passion nor absence of passion is found there, nor yet a middle state. Because of its freedom from all three the Innate is called Perfect Enlightenment."

"At the union of *Vajra* and lotus (*Linga* and *Yoni*), earth arises there from that contact, with the quality of hardness. From the flow of semen (*Shukra*) water arises, and fire from the friction. Wind comes from the motion, and space corresponds to the Bliss."

"The *Yogin* is Means and Compassion, and the *Yogini* Wisdom and Voidness, for she is deprived of causation. The thought of Enlightenment is the undivided Unity of Compassion and Voidness."

Hevajra tantra

Once in Union (*Maithuna*) with the Yogini, the Yogi aims to retain the sperm. Though there is movement it is not excessive. The Buddhist Tantras lay great emphasis on the retention of the sperm, except in a special case where insemination (fertilisation) is the special reason for the Sadhana, which is then performed in order to incarnate a "high" compassionate being in the womb of the Yogini. There is an enormous "esoteric" commentary on the stabilisation of "Breath, Thought and Semen". Many of the Tibetan Yoga doctrines (Dream-Yoga, Light-Yoga, Heat-Yoga, Transformation-Yoga) deal extensively with this basis. Stabilisation of Breath (through Pranayama), Thought (through Meditation) and Semen (through Maithuna-Sadhana) brings about Realisation of the four Joys (*Ananda, Paramananda, Viramananda* & *Sahajananda*) and the four kinds of Wisdom, which are inseperable from Voidness. Realisation of Voidness is the essence of Mahayana Buddhism, and therefore the essence of Vajrayana Tantric practice. The "Thought of Enlightenment" (*Bodhicitta*) is the subtle manifestation of the stabilisation of Breath, Thought and Semen. This "nectar" (*Amrit*) so produced, pervades the bodies of the Yogi and Yogini whilst in Union together, bringing indescribable joy to their Being. This is the state of true *Samadhi* . . . freed from the bonds of *Samsara*. Absolutely separate from the world of duality, yet existing *because of* that very duality . . .

"There is Moon and Sun and between them is the Seed. This last is that Being whose nature is Joy Supreme."

"Great knowledge abides in the body, free of all falsification, but although it pervades all things and exists in the body, it is not in the body that it arises."

Hevajra tantra

The "Hindu" tantras do not lay such emphasis on the retention of sperm. The ejection is considered to be "sacrifice" (*Homa*) to the *Devata* (Deity). It is the final oblation . . . the ultimate "blending" of elements. It is the union of *Bindu* ("point") with *Maya* ("illusion"). The Creative process coming from the union of Seed with Ovum. The Hindu "Trinity" of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara (Shiva) derives from this "point" (*Bindu*), which is itself derived from the Formless (*Nirakara*). *Nada* (Sound, vibration) and *Bindu* together are "Sun" and "Moon". In releasing the Sperm the Sadhaka utters *Swaha*, bringing about total union with the Goddess Kundalini incarnate . . . his Shakti. Some of the more "esoteric" Hindu tantras do, however, advocate the retention of the semen, and undoubtedly derive the reason for this from Buddhist traditions.

"So long as breath is in motion, the semen moves also. When breath ceases to move, the semen is also at rest."

Goraksa Samhita

"Inserting the *Linga* (penis) into the *Bhaga* (vulva), let him not discharge *Bodhicitta* (semen)."

Guhyasiddhi

"Vajragarbha said : 'So one should not eject this "camphor" (semen). It is there that all the Yoginis have their origin, and its nature is the Joy Innate.'"

Hevajra tantra

"Placing the *Vajra* in the *Padma* ("jewel" in the "lotus"), he should not release the *Bodhicitta*."

Vajramala

"In the Innate State of Great Blissfulness (*Mahasukha*), the *Bodhicitta* is formed."

Dohakosha

The Great *Siddha* Tilopa initiated his disciple Naropa into the "Tantric" *Maithuna-Sadhana* (Sadhana through sexual union), and explained the process in the following way :

"He who practises the Fulfilment Stage, which is one of the two methods of developing spirituality in the unsurpassable Mantrayana, is eager to realize the authentic Being ("Rainbow body") in his lifetime when he becomes aware of the signs that accompany the fading of all vibrations on the central pathway. *Such a man endeavours to experience the meaning of his own or his partners being.* The first is experienced by stimulating one's sexual power and vitality, not allowing it to decrease; the second by absorbing the partner's equivalent, so producing a constant feeling of Bliss and Nothingness."

H. Guenther

There is a school of Tantra, closely related to the "scientific" *Ayurveda* and *Rasayana* concepts of "Primary Elements", which does advocate the discharge of semen (and even total "orgasm"). The Yogi and Yogini, making use of highly specialised Yoga-Mudras like the *Vajroli,* aim to reabsorb through the sexual organs the "blended cosmic essence" discharged during physical orgasm. This is an Alchemic process, bringing about not a new incarnate being, but rather a "cosmically-permeated" Consciousness. Such techniques have an extremely esoteric tradition, though this tradition is traceable throughout India, Tibet and Nepal, even in the very earliest "mystic" cults (e.g. The *Kapalika, Aghori, Nath* and *Siddha*). For the practice of such techniques, the Yogi and Yogini must have *total* control over *all* the body functions (through Hatha-Yoga disciplines). It is said that great occult powers (*Siddhi*), such as flying through the air, are attainable through such practices. The Siddha *Saraha,* and the Siddhas *Padmavajra,* and *Sahajayogini Cinta,* as well as *Matsyendra Nath* and his follower *Gorakh Nath,* are reputed to have used such techniques of *Bodhicitta* retention and absorption.

Lama Anagarika Govinda explains the difference between the later Hindu Tantras (advocating the emission of Semen during *Maithuna-Sadhana*), and the earlier Buddhist Tantras (advocating the retention), in the following manner :

"... 'From the union of Shiva and Shakti unfolds the world', says the *Kulacudamani Tantra* (an important Hindu work). But the Buddhist does not seek the unfoldment of

the world . . . rather he seeks its regression into the 'unborn, unformed' which is at the basis of all unfoldment . . . the *Sunyata* (Voidness)."

Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* echoes the *Kulacudamani Tantra* thus :

"The *Maithuna* (sexual union) is the cause of great pleasure, the origin of all breathing creatures and the root of the world, which is without beginning or end."

Tantra teaches man to live Cosmically. Though the attainment of total *Samadhi* through *Sadhana* is the aim of all Tantric practice, both Hindu and Buddhist, for the true *Bodhisattva* (Compassionate Being) the *Siddhi* (Occult powers) are extremely helpful. Man is a truly Cosmic Being.

According to most ancient Yoga traditions, the Siddhi derive from five sources. These are :

(i) *Janmaja-Siddhi* : Co-existent with birth, coming from action in a previous life. Astrological influences can generate such Siddhi.

(ii) *Mantraja-Siddhi* : Coming from skill at Mantrayana (the science of subtle sound) and the related techniques of *Pranayama* (Breath-activity) and *Yantra*-making. Included here are the *Hatha-Yoga Asanas* and *Mudras*. When correctly activated, a Mantra can act on the external world, producing many types of "unexplainable" phenomena.

(iii) *Tapaja-Siddhi* : The practice of Austerities sometimes produces such a degree of *Pratyahara* (Sense-withdrawal) that Siddhis are developed. Ascetic practices such as extreme fasting, exposure to the elements, complex Asanas and non-differentiation between external and internal, subject and object, produce certain kind of Siddhi. The *Naga, Avdhut, Aghori, Nath* and *Kapalika* cults specialise in such

techniques. *Shiva* derived Siddhi in this manner.

(iv) *Ausadhija-Siddhi* : These are Siddhis from the exact use of herbs, drugs and elixers. There is an ancient tradition of consciousness-expansion substances. The *Nathist, Siddha, Rasa, Kalpa, Unani* and *Ayurveda* schools (all inter-related), developed techniques for the identification, purification, isolation and combination of elements in their primary (non-toxic) form. Metals, precious stones, herbs, poisons, venoms as well as complex organic products may be blended according to Elemental characteristics, into medicines and elixers. Certain of these products may produce non-toxic (Harmonic) Consciousness-expanding properties of a "catalytic" type, which, when injested, reach and influence the subtle body, and so produce Siddhi. Cosmological understanding forms the basis of this highly specialised science. Throughout the world there are reports of similar techniques for the generation of psychic or "occult" powers.

(v) *Samadhija-Siddhi* : These are the Siddhi from intense Samadhi. Intense meditation . . . "living-in-Samadhi" develops Siddhi. Siddhi are the natural manifestation of the subtle body. Sadhana develops Siddhi, according to the "formula" of the Sadhana. The astronomical/astrological influences, especially the phases of the moon, have a strong effect on the subtle body . . . which in turn governs the rhythms, cycles and activity of the physical.

Therefore all Sadhanas, which are practised in order to develop Siddhi, prescribe exact times and periods of the month for their practice. Traditionally Sunrise, Sunset, Mid-

night and Midday are most important, as are the fourteenth and eighth days of the "dark Fortnight" (The lunar month is divided into "the light" (*Shukla*) and "the dark" (*Krishna*) fortnights). There are, however, special sadhanas for each of the *Tithis* (Lunar days). The fifth day after the Menses of the Yogini is considered especially potent for the *Maithuna-Sadhana*.

Though traditions vary as to the Siddhis and their methods of release, here are some of the better known :

(i) *Animan*	:	the faculty of being able to reduce matter to the most minute.
(ii) *Mahiman*	:	the faculty of being able to expand without any limit.
(iii) *Lahiman*	:	Lightness and Levitation.
(iv) *Kariman*	:	Reduction and Heaviness.
(v) *Prapti*	:	Knowledge of everything past, present and future.
(vi) *Ishittva*	:	Supreme power.

Also described are the Siddhis of healing, communication with animals, control of hunger and thirst, thought transference, transformation, consciousness transference, knowledge of past lives, knowledge of distant universes and Cosmic Consciousness.

Conclusion

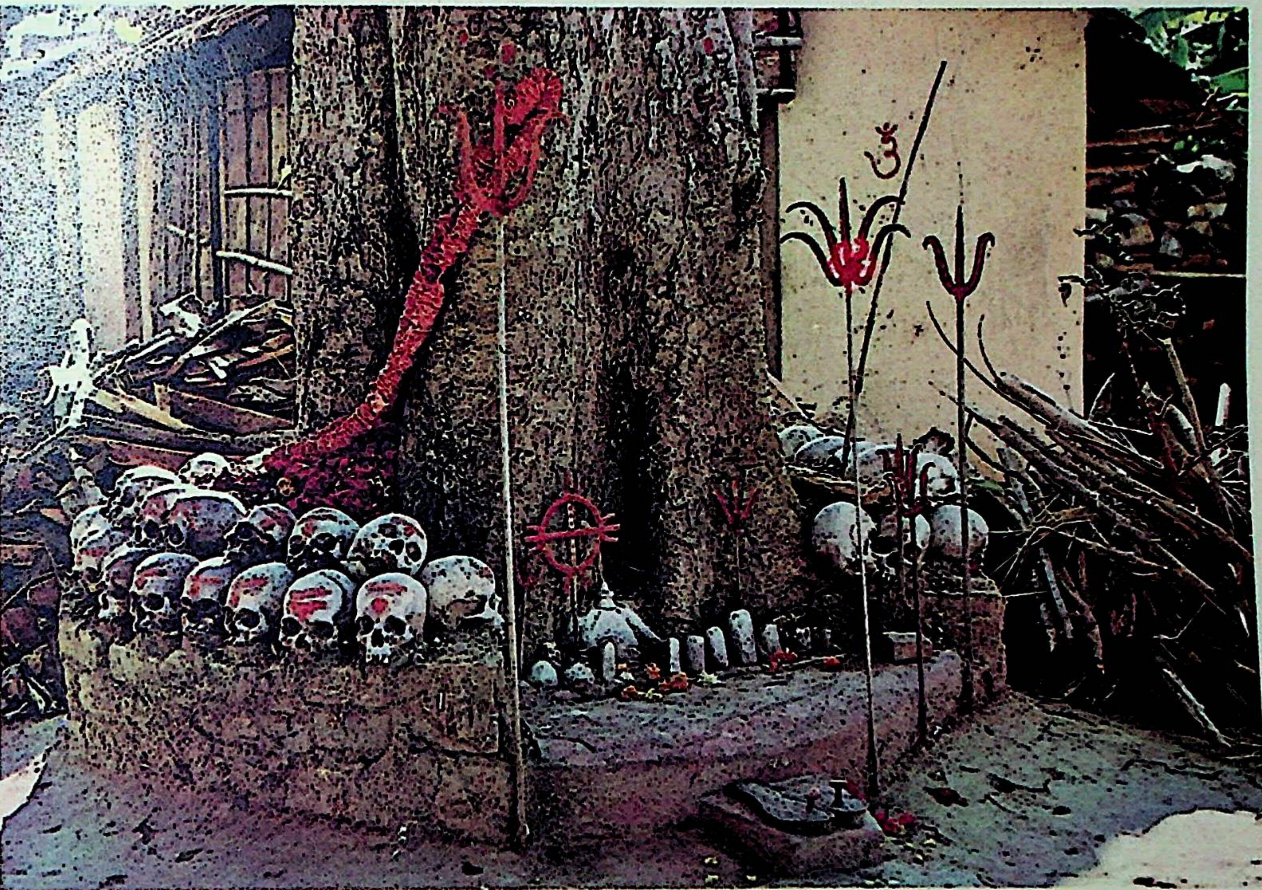
Tantra Yoga is the science of the future. It is a way of life drawing its inspiration from the Cosmic Realisations of the Enlightened of all ages and traditions. Though no "easy-way" to attain Realisation, the way of the Tantric is both direct and practical. To the Tantric Sadhaka, life is a continuous flow of Bliss-Realisation, with a perpetual promise of Cosmic Intensity. Life is a Joy, an Experience . . . a Continuum of Fabulous Events, Ever-revealing, and Fantastic to Realise. The Tantric way of life teaches man to live harmoniously in the universe, which is our home. Life is what we are here for . . .

May Life Reveal Its Joyous Secrets.

Sarva Mangalam

"The Yogi, devoted to action with a motive, treads the Path upon which are the Gods presiding over smoke, night, the dark fortnight of the moon, and the six months of the Southward course of the sun."

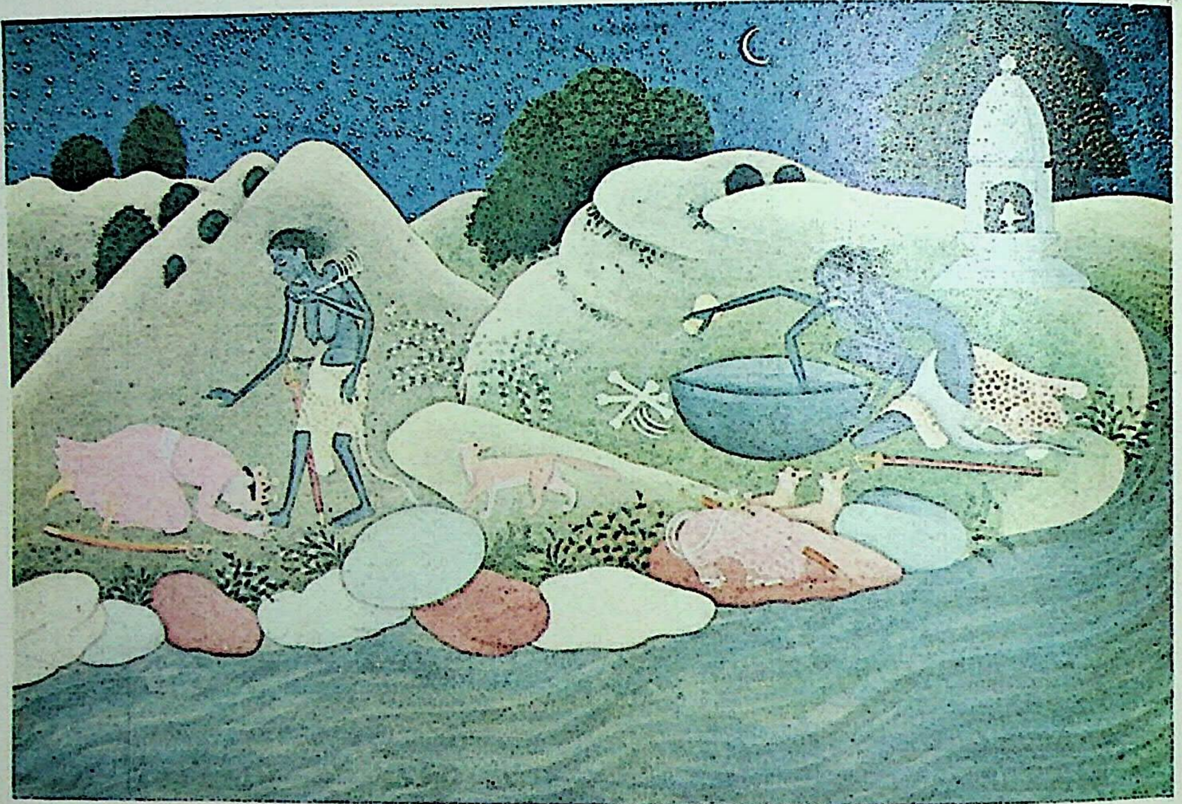
Gita



Skull Circle
"Om Namo Shivaya"
Vakreshwar Pitth, Bengal.

"What is laughter, what is joy, when the world is ever burning,
Shrouded by darkness, do you not seek a light?"

Dhammapada



Yoginis
Oracle in the cremation ground
Painting 18th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

"I am the Void, the World is Void, all the Three Worlds are Void. In this Pure State, there are neither Sin nor Virtue."

Tilopa



Sabasana

„Seated upon the corpse ("discarded personality"), wearing the "*Mahamudra*" symbolic ornaments (Crown, Ear-rings etc.) the Yogin-ascetic holds the Skull *(Kapala)* of Renunciation and wields the sword and shield, cutting off all discriminating thoughts, Nepali manuscript, 18th century : (Private Collection).

"The Knife is there to cut off the six defects of pride, ignorance, doubt, passion, anger and false views, and the Skull for bringing an end to all discriminating thought which would regard existence and non-existence as essentially different."

Hevajra tantra



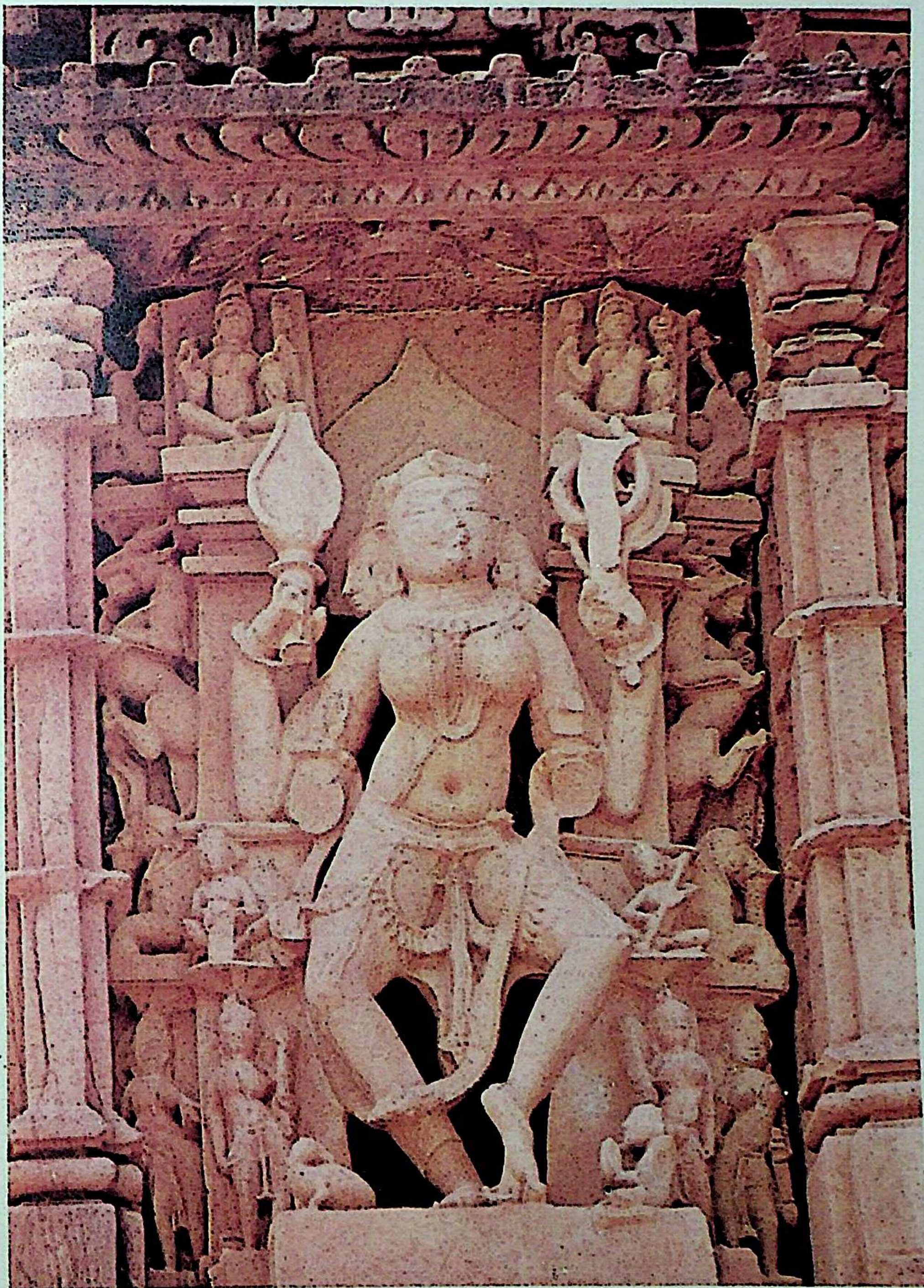
Kapalini-Devi

With "Third-Eye" of Wisdom open, garlanded with the Serpent *(Kundalini)*, holding Chopper (with which to slay the ego) and Skull (Renunciation), in full bloom of "youthful virginity", She strides over the highest mountains in All-Pervading Blissfulness.

Nepali manuscript, 17th century: (Private collection).

"Spirit, even when dwelling in this body, is really transcendent."

Gita

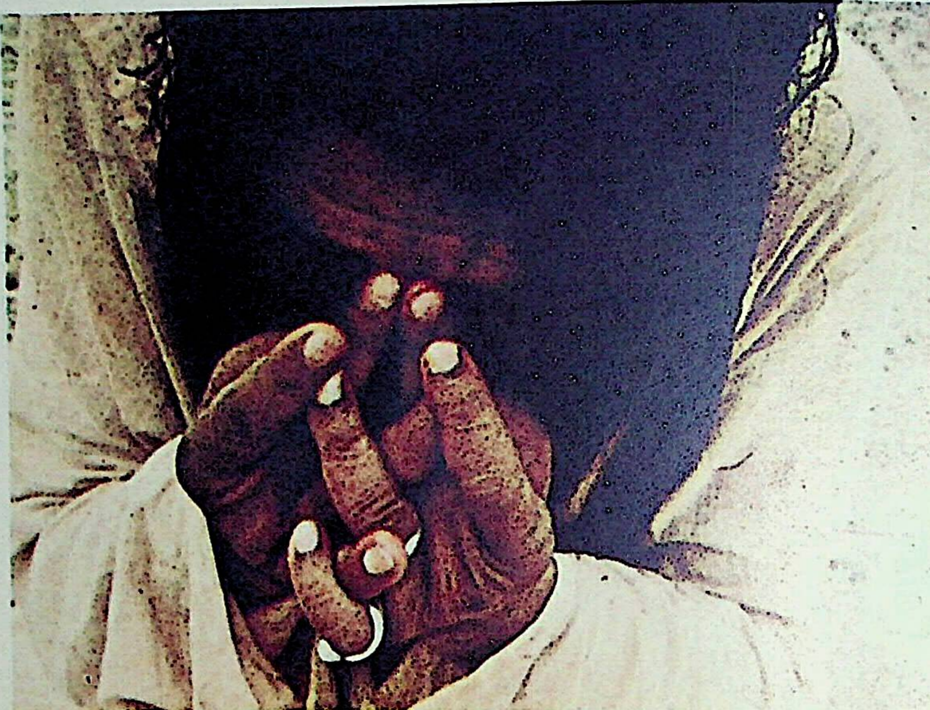


Yogini-Shakti

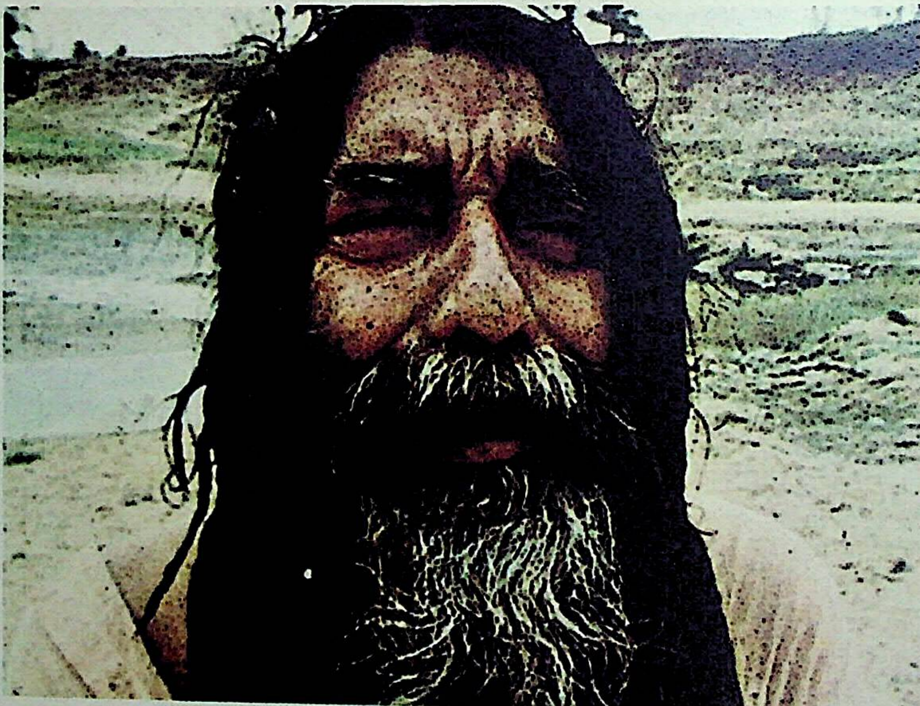
She wears the ornaments of initiation, and by Her dance expresses the Energy *(Shakti)* and Bliss *(Mahasukha)* of Reality, Khajuraho, *Circa* 11th century, Stone.

"Knowledge, the Object of Knowledge and the Knower, these are the threefold incentive to action; and the Doer, the Action and the organs of Action, these are the threefold constituents of action."

Gita



Maha-Yoni-Mudra



Samadhi
(Durga Das)

"He should do Yoni-Mudra and himself become Shaktimaya and One with Brahma."

"Renunciation is the principle means for attaining God."

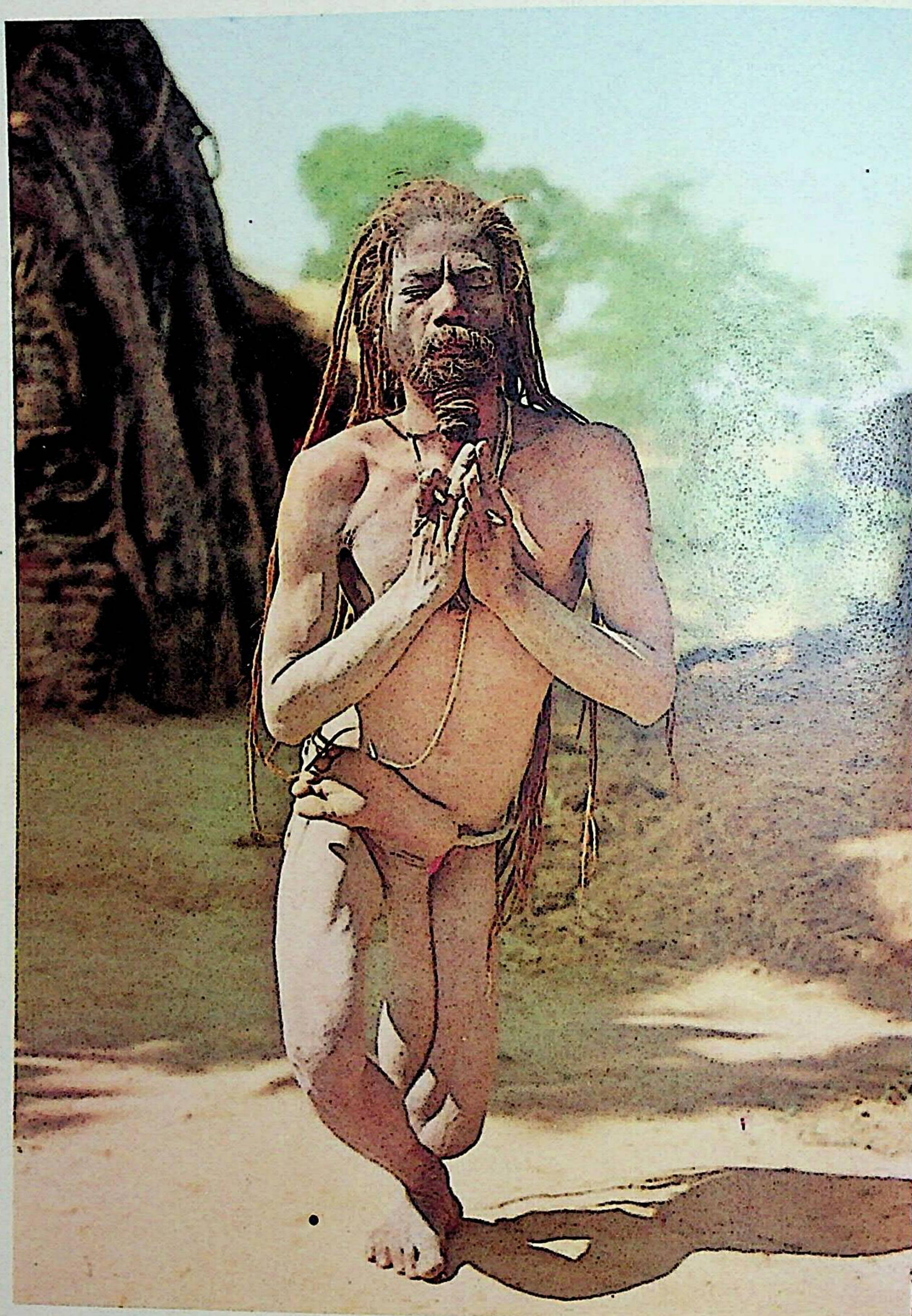
Gita



Yogini-Shakti drinking from Human Skull-bowl.
The earliest descriptions of Siddhi-endowed Yogis tell of those who always carried Human Skull-bowls *(Kapalikas)* as symbols of their Supreme Vow of Total Renunciation. Shiva and Buddha may both be depicted holding Skull-bowls, the iconographical presumption being that they both represent a common Yoga symbolism. Tantric Sadhakas frequently use the human skull-bowl for offerings of wine, and also for taking food from, when the sacrament of *Pancha-Tattva* (Five Essences) is practiced.
Stone sculpture, Hirapur, *Circa* 10th century.

"Some Yogis offer the *Prana* breath into the *Apana*, others, the *Apana* into the *Prana*.

Gita

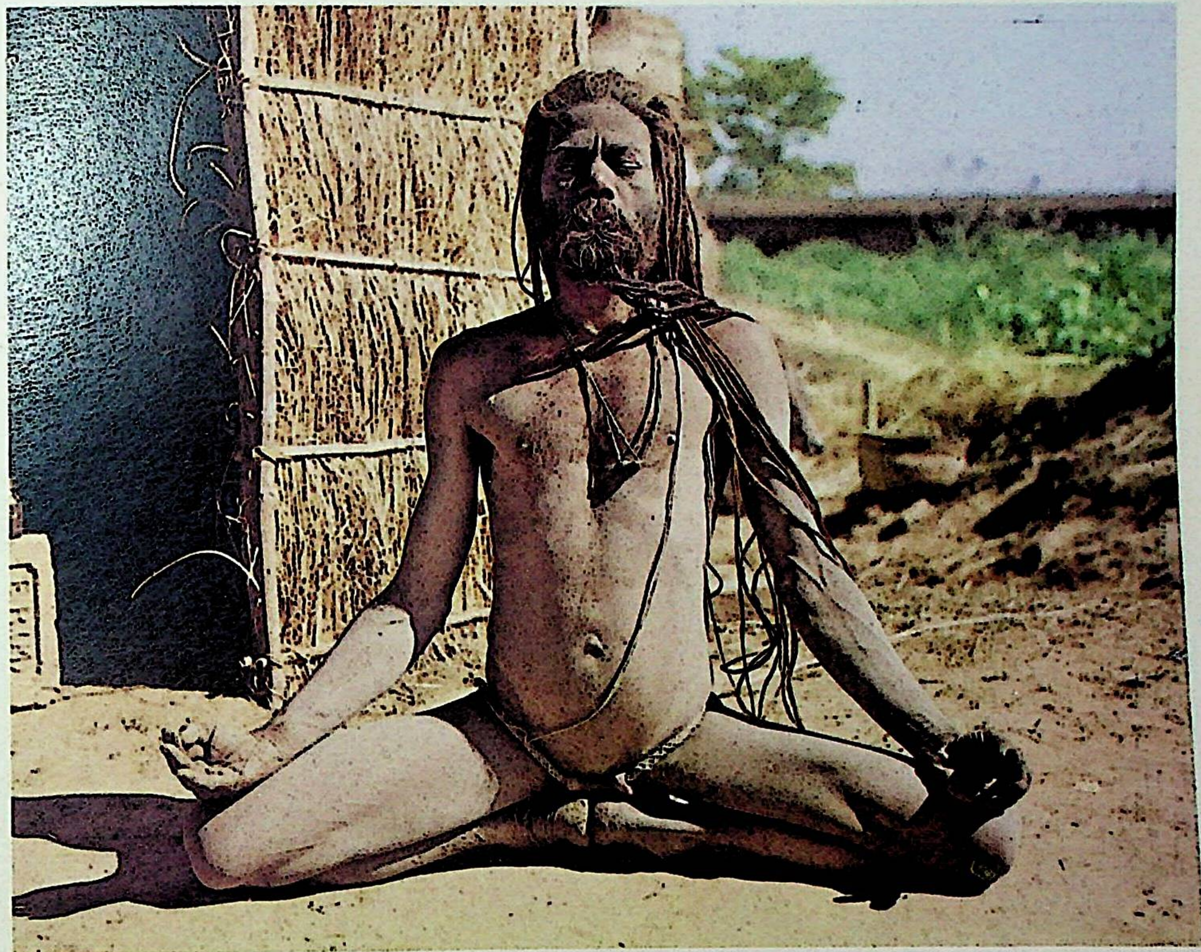


Gorur Asana with Mudra

This posture *(Asana)* develops one-pointedness and concentration when practiced in conjunction with *Pranayama* (Conscious Breathing) and "sealed" with the *Mudra* (Gesture), Pagla Baba, Bengal.

"The unswerving Firmness by which, through the Yoga of meditation, one controls the activities of the mind, the flow of the life-breath, and the activities of the senses, that Firmness is called Sattvic."

Gita



Bhag Asana

This is a posture of deepest Trance *Samadhi*, by which all the "*nadis, chakras* and *bindus*" are tamed. It is a position of ecstatic equilibrium, Pagla Baba, Bengal.

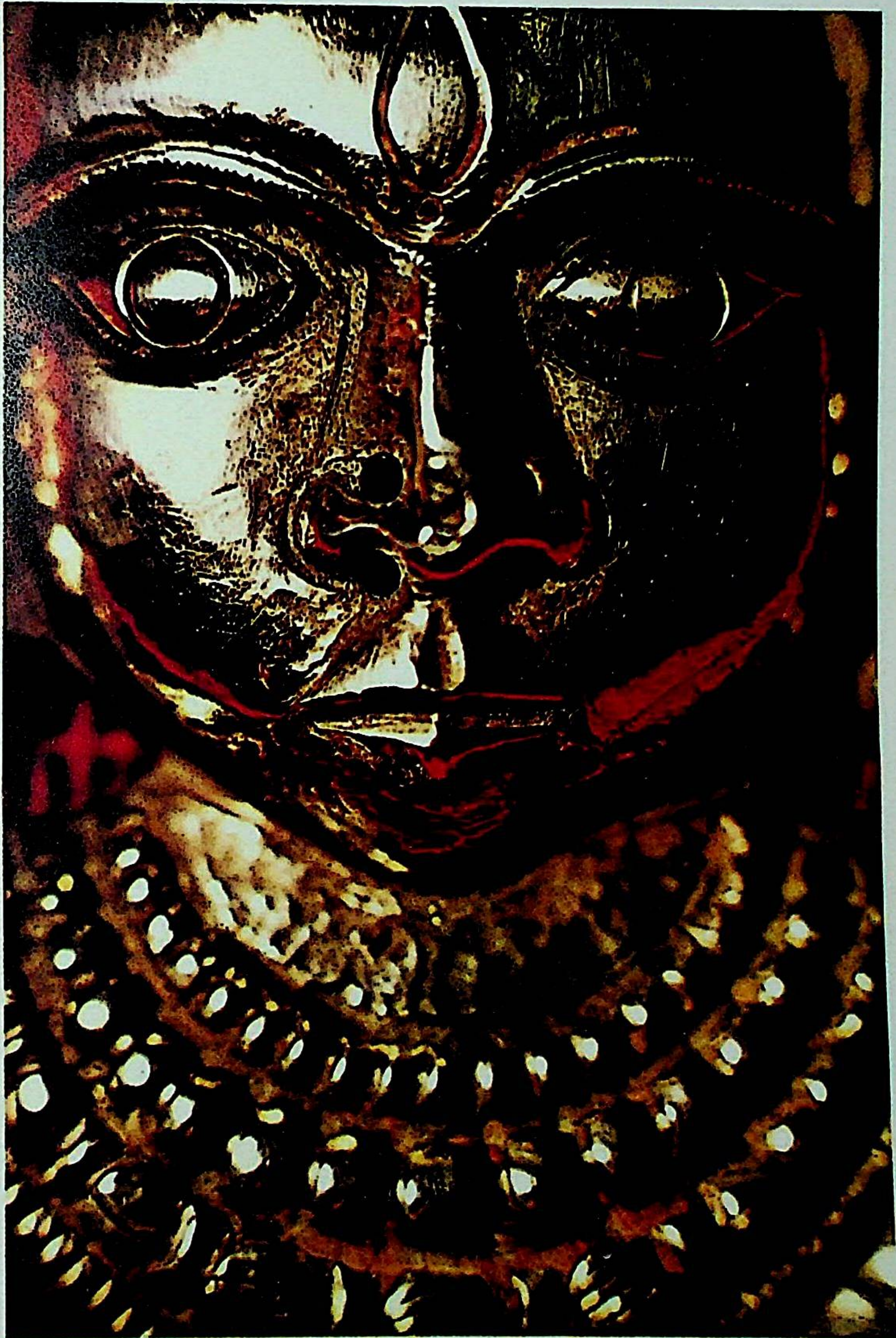
"Look into the mirror of your mind, the mysterious home of the Dakkini."
Tilopa



Ida and Pingala
Dancing Yogini-Shaktis
Konarak, situated on the East coast of India (Orissa), close to the Tantric Pitths of Uddiyana and Jaganath (Puri). Temple to the Sun *(Surya)*, was supposedly built by a being named Narasimha (who, tradition tells, had a tail), in the form of a Sun-carrying chariot pulled by seven horses. Attending the Sun Deity were the many *Devadasis* (Dancing *Yoginis*), like the dancing *Yogini*—Attendants circling around *Shiva Chakreshvara* (Lord of the Circle), dancing in worship, the "Vitality" of the Temple, Konarak.

"The light of the Sun, which illumines the entire universe, and that which exists from the Moon as well as the Fire, know That to be my shining."

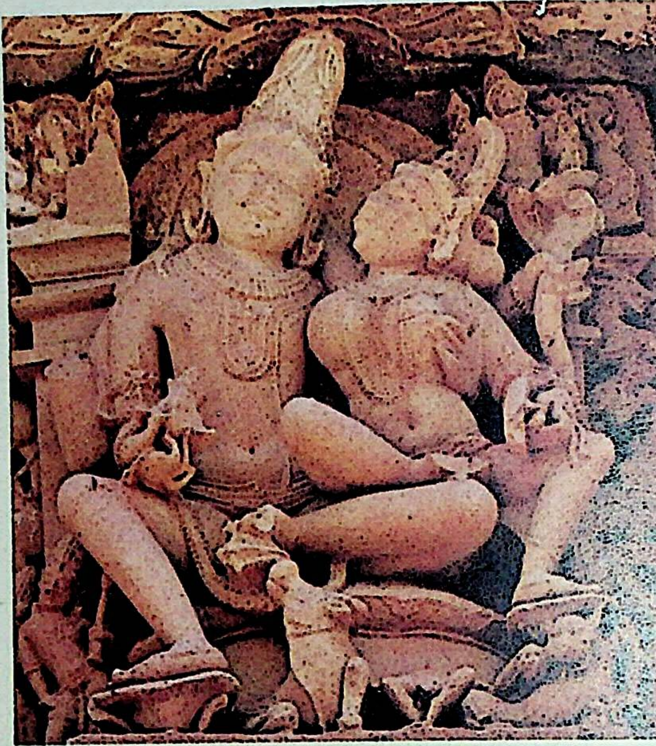
Gita



Laxmi-Devi
Manifestation of the Divine Form
Silver, South India, 17th century (Private collection).

"Only when united with Shakti, has Shiva power to create"

Anandalahari



Shiva and Shakti seated upon the Bull *(Nandi)* in the *Asana* of a Tantric *Sadhana*. He holds an erect Serpent, and both wear the ornaments of Tantric initiation. They are Lord and Lady of the Universe. God and Goddess. Khajuraho.



Shiva and Shakti, Jageshwar, Kumaon, Himalaya

"The psychic centres are transformed into Buddha-realms, with their Divine manifestations. The five elements, five poisons, five elements of personality, are changed into the five Wisdoms."

Way of Primeval Shen : Bon Tantra



Energies of the Chakra

The *Asanas* (Postures) and *Mudras* (Gestures), as well as the Expressions, Ornaments, Vehicles, Attributes, Bijas ... signify the Intense All-Pervading Blissfulness of the Total Experience...every channel filled with the Light of Inner Awakening. *Sahaja* is the Being-Bliss-Togetherness.

Hirapur Yogini Pitth, Orissa, *Circa* 10th century.

"My inner nature is tranquil, and holding Nairatma in loving embrace, I am possessed of tranquil Bliss."

Hevajra tantra

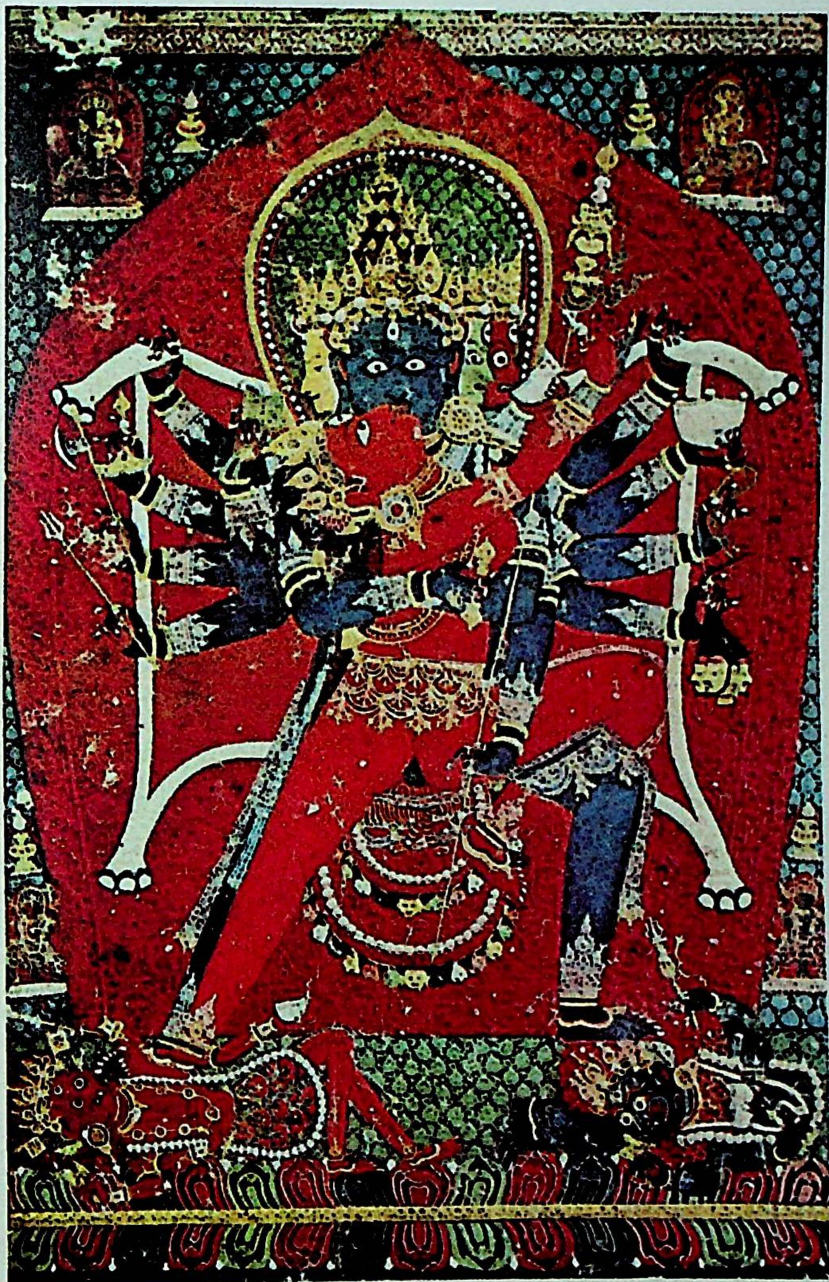


Hevajra and Nairatma

Divine Body of the *Yogi* and *Yogini*. Symbol for Absolute Identification, "Divine Body of Perfect Enlightenment". Indestructable Egolessness. It is the Being-Bliss. *Sahaja-Mahasukha*. The Joy Innate. Nepali-Tibetan Thanka, *Circa* 15th century : (Private collection).

"Purification consists of Self-experience, and by no other means of purification may one be released. This Self-experiencing, this Bliss Supreme, arises from the Pure Condition of the spheres of sense. All the spheres appear in the purified condition for the true Yogin, for of Buddha-nature is the world."

Hevajra tantra

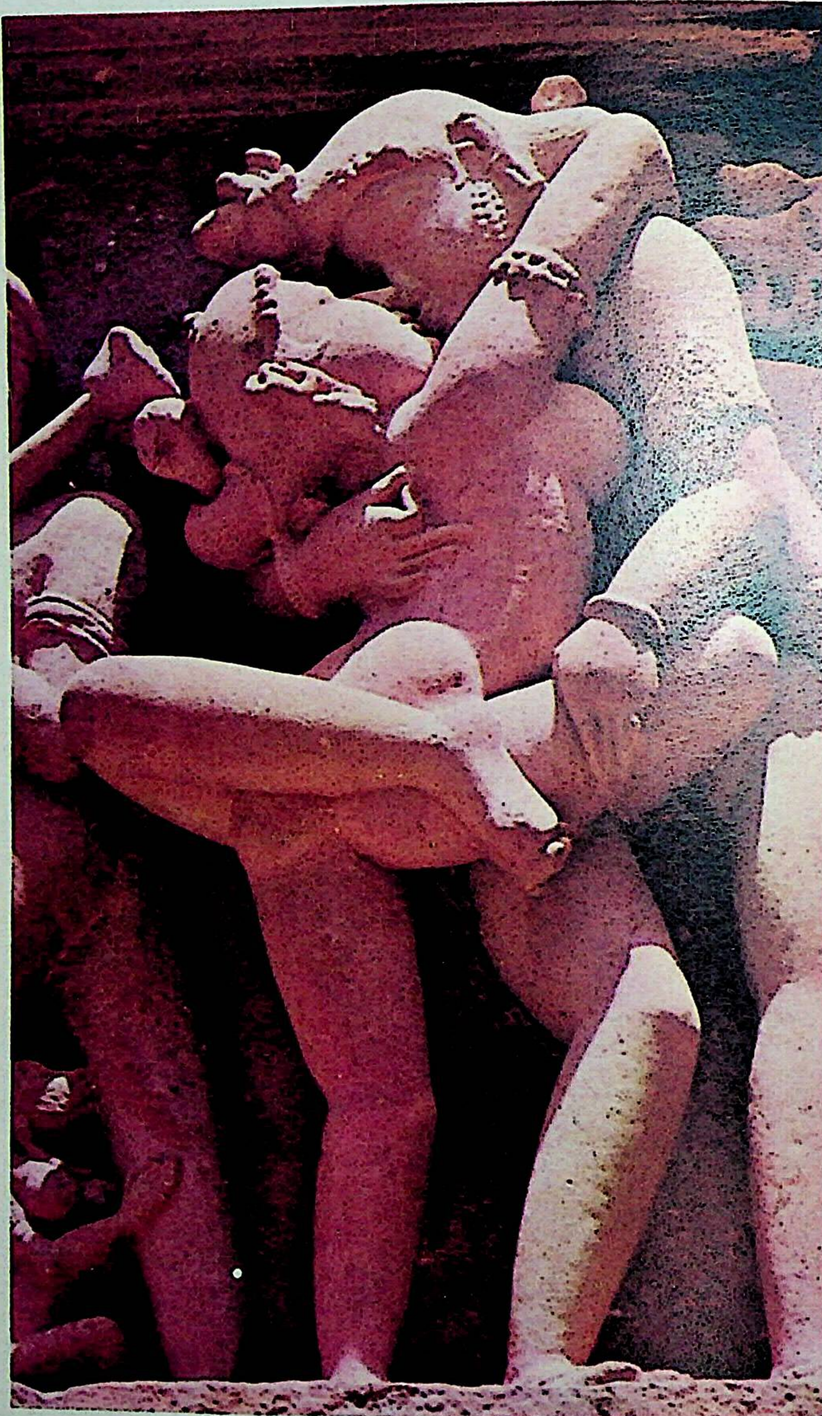


Samvara and Vajravarahi

Samvara, A Form of the *Hevajra-Heruka* "family" of visualisations, made famous by the Siddhas Padmasambhava, Tilopa, Naropa, Sahajayogini Cinta, Marpa, Milarepa and others, embraced in Blissfulness by His Innate Nature *(Prajna)*. In the *Yuganaddha Sadhanas*, the Essences (Sacraments : *Pancha Tattva)* may be enjoyed externally (Through the circle of Initiation) and internally (Through the Being-Bliss Experience). Practice is the Seed of Awakening, and it makes use of all activities (Of Body, Speech and Mind) in the process of Transformation. Nepali Thanka, *Circa* 17th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

"Entering into Union, the seal of Happiness is fixed. The 'drop' of Method and Wisdom flows White and Red : alone and without a partner, no result is achieved. One requires someone suitable, beautiful, and worthy of the secret of secret spells. Absorb this union of Method and Wisdom. Bring together channels, breath and the 'drop', and the Knowledge of Bliss and Voidness will arise in your 'soul-series'."

Way of Pure Sound : Bon



Cosmic Couple

A form of *Lata-Asana*

Shiva embraced "like a creeper" by His Shakti. Union of Cosmic Consciousness and Cosmic Energy. Their expressions indicate the Indescribable Joy *(Mahasukha)* of the Being-Bliss-Experience. Khajuraho stone sculpture, *Circa* 11th century.

"The door of the Mandala is opened, and the face of the Divinity is seen."

Way of Primeval Shen : Bon



The Goddess

The "Third-Eye" of Wisdom is open. Contemporary. Bengal.

"The Essence of wrath is Voidness."

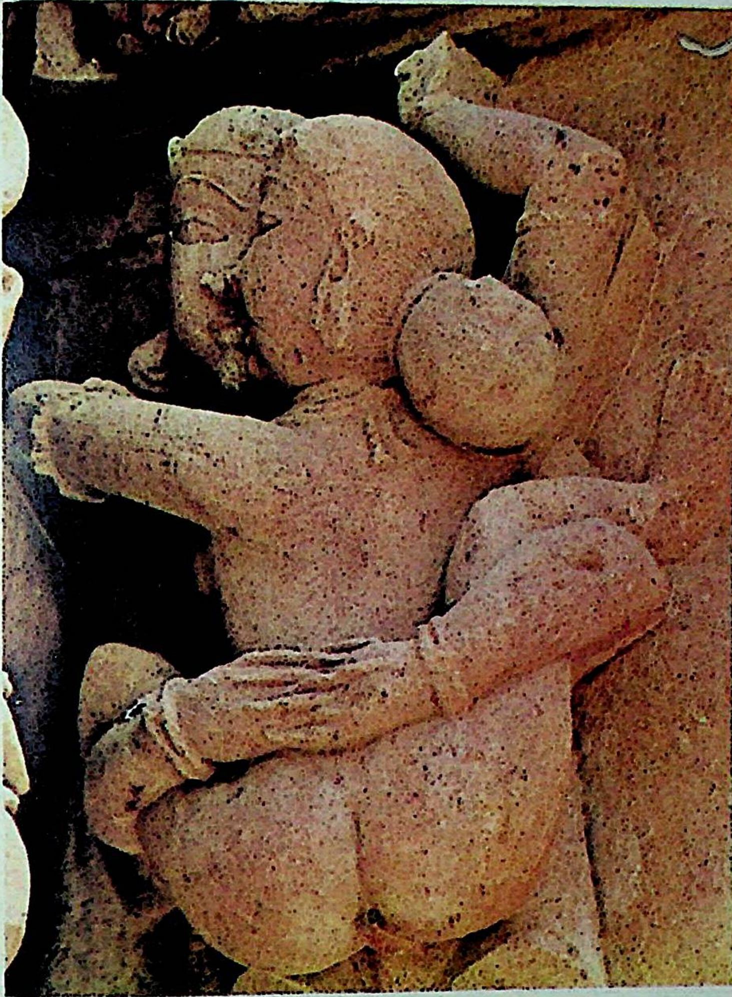
Pure Sound : Bon



Maheshasura-Mardini Devi
The Goddess slaying the Demon
Mahabalipuram, South India, Relief, 7th century.

"That by which the world is bound, by that same its bonds are released."

Hevajra tantra



Yoni-Asana
Khajuraho

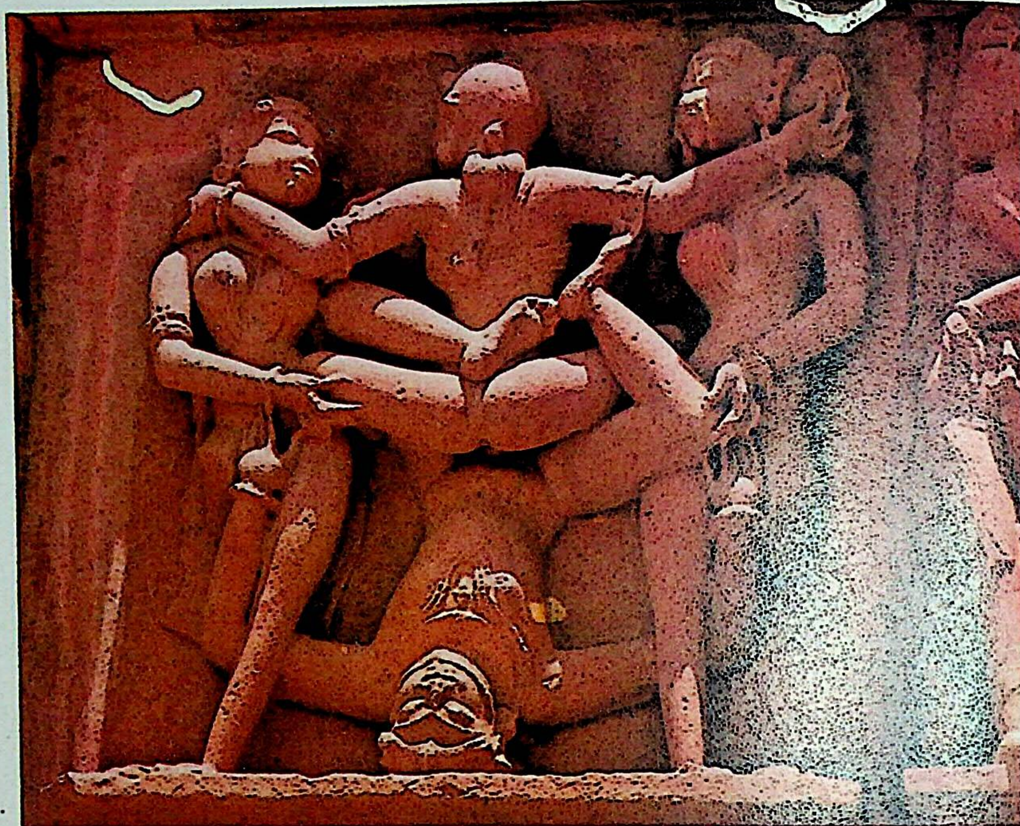


Navagrahas : The Nine "Planets"

Aditya (Sun), *Chandra* (Moon), *Mangala* (Mars), *Buddha* (Mercury), *Brhaspati* (Jupiter), *Shukra* (Venus), *Shani* (Saturn), *Rahu* and *Ketu* (The ascending and descending modes). Jageshwar, Kumaon Himalaya.

"A Yogini is resorted to, so long as she possesses Shukra."

Hevajra tantra



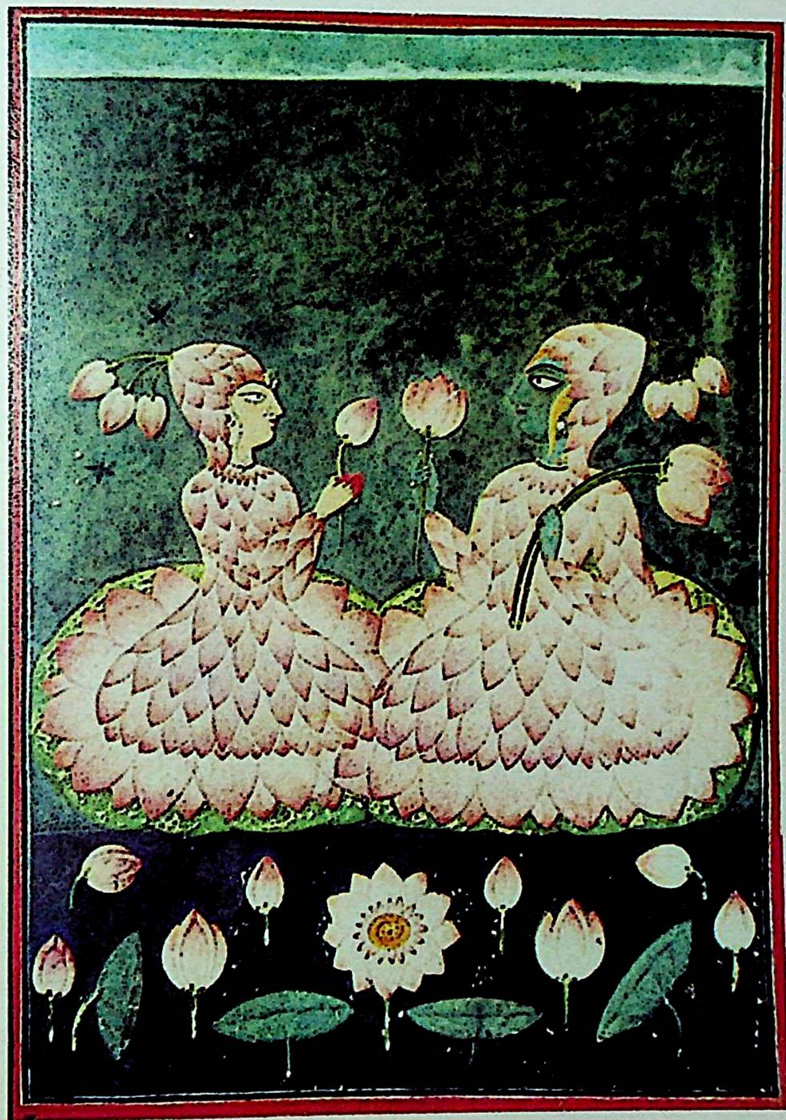
Chakra Posture
Complex Maithuna-Asana, Khajuraho.
Here the *Asana* as *Tantra* (Form) can be quite clearly seen.



Maithuna-Asana
Palm-leaf (Orissa), 16th century: (Private Collection).

"Useless is a gem uncut, but once cut, it gives forth its brilliance."

Hevajra tantra



Radha and Krishna
Symbolic of the All-pervading Blissfulness of the integrated Being. The Cosmic Lotus. Painting. Basohli school, 18th century, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

"Like a dream, like a mirage, like the 'Intermediate State', so the Mandala appears from continuous application to the practice. The Mandala is the full expression of the Great Bliss *(Mahasukha)*, for from nowhere else does it have its origin."

Hevajra tantra



Mandala

The Yogin sits at the centre of the *Mandala*, his body coloured Red and White, representing the two "poles" to be integrated together by the *Sadhana*. He sits within a six-pointed star (formed by two interlaced triangles, representing Male and Female Essence-principles), itself a symbol of the six senses (including mind) which are made use of in the "formula" *(Sadhana)* of Realisation. Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares, Nepali manuscript, *Circa* 17th century.

"The world is pervaded by Bliss, which pervades and is itself pervaded."

Hevajra tantra

Bibliography

Anuruddha, R.P., *Introduction into Lamaism*. Hoshiarpur, 1959.
Avalon, A., (Sir John Woodroffe) *Introduction to Tantra Shastra*. Madras, 1963.
———, *Garland of Letters*. Madras, 1955.
———, *Principles of Tantra*. Madras, 1960.
———, *The Great Liberation*. Madras, 1963.
———, *The Serpent Power*. Madras, 1958.
———, *The World as Power*. Madras, 1957.

Ballantyne, J., *The Samkhya Aphorism of Kapila*. Benares, 1963.
Banerjea, A.N., *Philosophy of Gorakhnath*. Gorakhpur, 1962.
Behanan, K., *Yoga : A Scientific Evaluation*. New York, 1938.
Bernard, Theos., *Hatha Yoga*. London, 1950.
Bharati, A., *The Tantric Tradition*. London, 1965.
Bhattacharyya, B., *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*. Benares, 1964.
———, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*. Calcutta, 1968.
———, *Two Vajrayana Works*. Baroda, 1929.
———, *Nispannayogavali*. Baroda, 1949.
———, *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. Baroda, 1931.
———, *Sadhanamala*. Baroda, 1968.
———, *Magnet Dowsing*. Calcutta, 1967.
———, *Gem Therapy*. Calcutta, 1964.
Bhattacharya, D., *Chandogaya Brhamana*. Calcutta, 1958.
Bhattnagar, Prem. K., *The Renaissance of Devanagri Akshras*. Delhi, 1961.
Bhishagratna, K., *Sushruta Samhita*. Calcutta, 1916.
Bose & Haldar., *Tantras : Their Philosophy and Occult Secrets*. Calcutta, 1956.
Brahma, N., *The Philosophy of Hindu Sadhana*. Calcutta, 1932.

Briggs, G., *Goraknath and the Kanphata Yogis*. Calcutta, 1958.
Bromage, B., *Tibetan Yoga*. London, 1959.

Chakravarti, C., *The Soma or Sauma Sect of the Shaivas*. Calcutta, 1932.
———, *The Tantras : Studies on their Religion and Literature*. Calcutta, 1963.
Chandra, Lokesh., *Mandalas of the Tantra-Samuccaya*. Delhi, 1969.
Chang, G.C.C., *Teachings of Tibetan Yoga*. New York, 1963.
———, *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*. New York, 1967.
———, *Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra*. New York, 1968.
Chattopadhyaya, S., *Evolution of Hindu Sects*. Delhi, 1970.
Clark, W., *Two Lamaistic Pantheons*. Cambridge (Mass.), 1937.
Coomaraswamy, A.K., *The Mirror of Gestures*. Delhi, 1970.

Dalai Lama., *An Introduction to Buddhism*. Delhi, 1968.
———, *The Opening of the Wisdom-Eye*. 1969.
Danielou, A., *Hindu Polytheism*. London, 1951.
———, *Yoga : The Method of Re-integration*. London, 1960.
Dasgupta, Sh., *An Introduction to Tantrik Buddhism*. Calcutta, 1950.
———, *Obscure Religious Cults*. Calcutta, 1962.
David-Neel, A., *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet*. New York, 1959.
Dikshit, M., *Samatantram*. Benares, 1963.
Dikshit, S.K., *The Mother Goddess*. Delhi, 1960.

Eliade. M., *Shamanism : Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton, 1968.
———, *Yoga : Immortality and Freedom*. London, 1958.
Evans-Wentz., *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*. Oxford, 1958.
———, *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa*. Oxford, 1951.
———, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Oxford, 1956.
———, *The Tibetan Book of Great Liberation*. Oxford, 1954.

Filliozat, J., *The Classical Doctrine of Indian Medicine*. Delhi, 1964.
Flagg, W., *Yoga or Transformation*. London, 1898.
Frederic, L., *Yoga Asanas*. London, 1961.

Garrison, O., *Tantra : The Yoga of Sex*. New York, 1964.
Gordon, A., *The Iconography of Tibetan Lamaism*. New York, 1959.
Goswami, H., *Kamaratna Tantra*. Gauhati, 1928.

Govinda, Lama., *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy*. London, 1961.
———, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*. London, 1962.
Guenther, H., *Gampopa : The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*. London, 1959.
———, *Yuganaddha : The Tantric View of Life*. Benares, 1964.
———, *The Life and Teaching of Naropa*. Oxford, 1963.
Gupta, S.S., *Tree Symbol Worship in India*. Calcutta, 1965.
Gurdjieff, G., *All and Everything*. London, 1950.

Hoffmann, H., *The Religions of Tibet*. London, 1961.

Jacobs, H., *Western Psycho-therapy and Hindu Sadhana*. London, 1961.
Jhaveri, M., *Comparative and Critical Study of Mantrashastra*. Ahmedabad, 1944.

Karambelkar, V.W., *The Atharva-Veda and the Ayur-Veda*. Nagpur, 1961.
Kavirtna, K., *Charaka Samhita*. Calcutta, 1890.
Kazi, Lama Samdup., *Shrichakrasambhara Tantra*. Madras, 1910.
Krishnamacharya, V., *Sphotavada of Nagesa Bhatta*. Madras, 1946.
———, *Lakshmi-Tantra*. Madras, 1959.

Mookerjee, Ajit., *Tantra Art*. Basel, 1966.
Mukherjee, R., *Theory and Art of Mysticism*. Bombay, 1960.
Mukherji, Bhudera., *Rasajalanidhi*. Benares, 1938.

Neumann, E., *The Great Mother*. New York, 1961.

Oman, J.C., *The Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*. London, 1903.
Ouspensky, P.D., *In Search of the Miraculous*. London, 1949.
———, *A New Model of the Universe*. London, 1953.
———, *The Fourth Way*. London, 1957.
———, *Tertium Organum*. London, 1966.

Padamarajiah, Y.T., *A Comparative Study of Jaina Theories*. Bombay, 1963.
Pandit, M.P., *Studies in the Tantras and the Veda*. Madras, 1967.
———, *Lights on the Tantra*. Madras, 1968.
———, *Gems from the Tantras*. Madras, 1969.

Pandit, M.P., *Aurobindo on the Tantra*. Madras.
———, *Kundalini Yoga*. Madras.
Payne, E., *The Shaktas : An Introduction and Comparative Study*. Calcutta, 1933.
Pott, P., *Yoga and Yantra*. Leiden, 1966.
Puharich, A., *Beyond Telepathy*. London, 1962.

Raman, Venkat., *Nagarjuna's Philosophy*. Tokyo, 1962.
Ray, P., *History of Chemistry in Ancient and Medieval India*. Calcutta, 1956.
Rele, V.G., *Mysterious Kundalini*. Bombay, 1927.
———, *Yogic Asanas*. Bombay, 1939.
Rolland, R., *The Life of Ramakrishna*. Calcutta, 1960.
Roy, A.T., *Nervous System of the Ancient Hindu*. Hazaribagh, 1930.

Sahu, N., *Buddhism in Orissa*. Cuttack, 1958.
Sanyal, Amiyanath., *Ragas and Ragini*. Calcutta, 1959.
Saraswati, Pratyag., *Japasutram*. Madras, 1961.
Saunders, E., *Mudra*. London, 1960.
Schmdt, Toni., *The Eighty-Five Siddhas*. Stockholm, 1958.
Seal, Brajendranath., *Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*. Delhi, 1958.
Sen, R., *Ascetic Enjoyment : Its Background in Philosophy and Medicine*. Calcutta, 1966.
Shastri, H., *Origin and Cult of Tara*. Calcutta, 1925.
Singh, Mohan., *Gorakhnatha and Mediaeval Hindu Mysticism*. Lahore, 1937.
Sinha, J., *Shakta Monism Cult of Shakti*.
Sircar, D.C., *The Shakta Pitthas*. 1960.
Snellgrove, D., *Buddhist Himalaya*. Oxford, 1957.
———, *The Hevajra Tantra*. Oxford, 1959.
———, *The Nine Ways of Bon*. Oxford, 1967.

Thomas, P., *Kama Kala : Hindu Ritual of Love*. Bombay, 1960.
Tucci, Giuseppe., *Indo-Tibetica*. Rome, 1932–41.
———, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*. Rome, 1949.
———, *Theory and Practice of the Mandala*. London, 1961.
———, *Tibet*. London, 1967.

———, *Rati-Lila : An Interpretation of Tantric Imagery in Nepal*. Geneva, 1969.

Vasu, N., *Modern Buddhism and its Followers in Orissa*. 1911.
Vasu, Shris. Chandra., *Gheranda Samhita*. Madras, 1933.
Vidyarnava, Rai. B., *Shiva Samhita*. Allahabad, 1923.

Waddell, L., *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*. Cambridge, 1967.
Woode, Ernest., *Yoga*. London, 1962.
Woods, James., *The Yoga-system of Patanjali*. Cambridge (Mass.), 1914.

Zimmer, H., *The Philosophies of India*. New York, 1958.
———, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*. New York, 1946.

Acknowledgement

The author wishes to thank all those who aided in making this work a reality. Special credit is given to the work of Agehananda Bharati, Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, Garma. C. Chang, The XIVth Dalai Lama, Shashibhusan Dasgupta, M. Eliade, Dr Evans-Wentz, Omar Garrison, Lama Anagarika Govinda, Herbert Guenther, Gopinath Kaviraj, Ajit Mookerjee, Madhav Pandit, P. Pott, David Snellgrove, Giuseppe Tucci, Sir John Woodroffe and Heinrich Zimmer, which has brought the science of Tantra Yoga to the attention of the public . . . and which has been a constant source of inspiration and reassurance for the author. Special thanks to Durga Das Shastri and Pagla Baba for practical advice and encouragement.

Thanks also to Bharat Kala Bhavan (Benares), Stanislas Klossowski, Virendra Kumar, Ajit Mookerjee and others for allowing access to their private collections, and for making available the same for photographic reproduction. Special thanks also to Michael Cooper and Richard Polak for selfless contribution of their photographic skill. Thanks to Eva and Tara Purnima for a constant stream of love and patience.

Last but not least, all credit to Munshiram Manoharlal (New Delhi) for making this work a published reality.

